BRITISH ANARCHISM 1881-1914:

REALITY AND APPEARANCE

Haia Shpayer

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Abstract

This thesis examines the history of British anarchism in the late Victorian and Edwardian era against the background of the movement's popular image.

The prevalent image of anarchism assumed the individual to be an unscrupulous criminal and the movement to be a conspiracy intent on unleashing revolutionary violence upon the world. Such a description imparted little of the authentic pursuits and beliefs of British anarchism and proved to be one of the major obstacles even to a partial understanding of the movement. However, it was precisely through this image that anarchism penetrated the social consciousness and exerted its most noticeable impact on society.

In this light, the thesis is divided into two parts: the first discusses the reality of British anarchism and the second its image. Part one consists of three chapters. Chapter one chronicles the various streams and groupings that made up the British anarchist movement. The second chapter details some of the social and ideological marks that characterised the movement while the third studies the interrelationships between anarchism and the wider socialist movement.

Part two consists of three chapters. The first two depict the image as it appeared in the press and the literature of the time. The concluding chapter indicates some of the practical implications of the image as reflected through the treatment of anarchists by state organs and the public at large; the use that was made of it as a political weapon against other causes, and the political debates it generated.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

I.I.S.H. - International Institute of Social History. Amsterdam.

ILP - Independent Labour Party.

LEL - Labour Emancipation League.

N.C. - Nettlau Collection.

SDF - Socialist Democratic Federation.

S.L. - Socialist League.

PREFACE

"Give a dog a bad name and hang him. Give a man a bad name - Anarchist, for example - and hang him by all means. Anarchist is a very bad name indeed"[1]. Thus was the predicament of British anarchism most succinctly conveyed in these words by George Bernard Shaw. The multitude of stigmatic connotations borne by the anarchist movement converged to form an image which was to haunt it and prove to be the most formidable obstacle to its growth. This image, however, did little justice to the authentic qualities of anarchist activities and attitudes in this country. The thesis seeks to contrast this image with the reality of anarchist existence in Britain and to show the interaction between them.

Accordingly, the work is divided into two parts: the first, chapters 1-3, discusses the reality of the anarchist movement, and the second, chapters 4-6, deals with its perceived appearance. More specifically, part one examines the evolution of the movement, its distinct characteristics, its impact and some of the factors - both internal and external - that undermined its development. The first two chapters of the second part depict the image as it was portrayed in the contemporary means of communication. The concluding chapter explores the forceful impact of the popular image on the fate of the movement - some aspects of which are also discussed in part one - and records some of the wider ramifications of this image.

1. The Anarchist, March 1885.

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INTRODUCTION

Revolutionary ideas and acts which would later be associated with anarchism had abounded in Britain and elsewhere long before anarchism came to be a recognised revolutionary theory. However, only few thinkers went beyond discarding traditional values and conceptions in the name of freedom and social justice, and proposed in their stead a systematic programme of complete social and economic reconstruction along anti-authoritarian, decentralist and individualistic lines. Fewer still were the attempts to implement any such programmes. But even with the relatively late growth of an anarchist movement in Britain, it was precisely in that country that combinations of ideas born of the spirit of anarchism - and actual projects based on them - were to appear very early.

The tumultous Civil War of the mid 17th century led to the first recorded consolidation of anarchist sentiment and to the first experiements in 'living anarchism'. Between 1648 and 1652, Gerard Winstanley, a bankrupt merchant, wrote several tracts and pamphlets dominated by a vision of a communal society from which Government, Church and private property would be banished. With those of the Diggers who followed him, he tried to give substance to his proposals, and a few proto-anarchist communes sprang up. All of them, however, disappeared in face of opposition.

Almost 150 years later, with France in the midst of the 'reign of terror' (1792-94), William Godwin, the son of a nonconformist pastor, published Enquiry Concerning Political Justice (1793), an anarchist treatise in all but name. Godwin's son-in-law, the poet Shelley, also echoed anarchist sentiments in his onslaught on the state and the Church, and in his evocation of liberty where he expressed the hope that

> the free would stamp the impious name
> of King into the dust!
>
> ("Ode to Liberty" (1820) XV 211/2)[1].

1. Percy B. Shelley, The Complete Poetical Works (Oxford, 1921), p. 603.

All three were later regarded as ideological precursors: Winstanley was hailed as a forbear of communist-anarchism[1]; Godwin's philosophy constituted a reservoir from which anarchists of all sorts could draw guidance, and Shelley was a source of pride to those anarchists who saw themselves as heirs to his moral sensibility. Yet the thinking of none of them had direct ideological links with the later movement. Until the 1880s, when anarchism began to assert itself, there had been an interruption in the development of coherent anarchist thinking in Britain; an interruption which spanned the very decades when the continent of Europe and the U.S.A. had become the breeding-grounds of theories based on anarchist premises. This body of anarchist thought grew against a background of intellectual ferment and revolutionary aspirations and was rich in nuances and directions. It soon fired the imagination of enthusiasts who sought to popularise its ideals as a prelude to victory. Such adherents were not to be found in Britain for several decades.

Fundamental to all varieties of anarchism was the axiom that authority was the antithesis of freedom - the anarchists' most sacrosanct and ultimate value - and as such at the root of all evil. Political, religious and juridical authority were seen to derive their impetus from the most "bestial and savage instinct" to command others[2] - an instinct, the individual and institutional manifestations of which deprived the individual throughout history of any meaningful control over his own life. Denying the possibility of ever changing the nature of authority, the anarchists declared an all-out war on it, and vowed to erect a new system of society without government - "harmony in such a society being obtained, not by submission to law, or by obedience to any authority, but by free agreements".[3] All their other conceptions, however divergent, stemmed from

1. Winstanley was a relatively late discovery for anarchists since his writings began to be studied only towards the end of the 19th century.
2. G.P. Maximoff, ed., The Political Philosophy of Bakunin (N.Y., 1953), p. 248.
3. Encyclopaedia Britannica (1910).

these premises. All anarchists were characterised by an implacable opposition to state control, parliamentary representation and capitalist economy, all of which, in their view, were outgrowths of the principle of authority. Anarchism protested against all economic, social and intellectual forces that destroyed human freedom, dignity and creativity, and promised to put an end to inequality and class exploitation. It called upon the individual, whoever he was, to abandon automatic conformity and to rebel against the wrongs of the social matrix, and challenged him to confront the most fundamental questions of existence. Anarchism thus demanded thorough examination of social phenomena as well as self-examination. The vision it held out was of a moral and humane society rooted in decentralism, voluntarism and solidarity.

On this common basis several schools of thought arose, differentiated chiefly by the economic principles of the future society each wished to establish - above all by the manner of distribution of the products of labour. The first philosopher to use the word 'anarchism' to connote his socio-political doctrine was the Frenchman Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809-65). The word appeared in his first major work What is Property? in 1840. Proudhon welded together liberal and socialist economics into a theoretical system which he was to call mutualism[1]. His ideal society was a decentralised federation composed of voluntary and egalitarian associations or communes in which the producers would freely exchange their produce for their mutual benefit by means of labour cheques issued by a national bank. Proudhon believed that the disappearance of interest would reduce profits to a minimum and yet allow individual initiative and a degree of private property. By outlining a society in which the social arrangement would promote the highest degree of individual freedom but without afflicting the social whole, Proudhon became the spiritual father of both socialist and individualist-anarchism. The basic ideological difference between these two main tendencies was

1.. For the origin of the name see George Woodcock, Anarchism (London, 1971), p. 108.

that whereas the socialist anarchists tended to stress the need for social co-operation and solidarity, the individualist-anarchists emphasised more the primacy of the individual. But the two strands allowed some intermingling.

Socialist anarchism was developed during the 1860s into collectivist-anarchism largely by the Russian Michael Bakunin (1814-76). Under his proposed system, the means of production would be held by the whole of society, each member receiving the value of his labour. From the 1870s onwards, the Russian Peter Kropotkin (1842-1921), the Frenchman Elisée Reclus (1830-1905) and the Italian Errico Malatesta (1853-1932) further developed the concept into communist-anarchism under which the inhabitants of a system of federated communities would contribute according to their means and receive according to their needs. From the 1890s, another strand, anarcho-syndicalism, developed in France. It envisaged a society based on freely organised and self-regulated industrial unions. From the 1880s onwards, the Russian writer, Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910) amalgamated parts of early Christian doctrine with parts of communist-anarchism to form Christian-anarchism, which was often called Tolstoyanism.

Individualist-anarchism had been worked out independently by Josiah Warren (1794-1874) in the U.S.A. more than a decade before Proudhon consolidated his views. The combination of both theories was expounded mainly by American radicals, the most outspoken of whom was Benjamin Tucker (1854-1939). An extreme variant of individualist-anarchism was cultivated by Max Stirner (1806-56) a German teacher, at the time that Proudhon's ideas were beginning to appear. For him, the ideal individual was an untrammelled solipsist leading a totally uncommitted existence, above any social or moral considerations. The individual egoists, he believed, would co-operate when and in the manner most suitable to their purposes, and each would go his own way as soon as union no longer served him.

Only faint reverberations of these developments reached

the British Isles before the 1880s. Of all the thinkers, Warren's writings and social experimentation were for a few decades to kindle the widest interest - apparent even in the 1820s. Having a similar outlook to Warren, the circles associated with Robert Owen and William Thompson were the most intrigued[1]. Proudhon's ideas took longer to arrive. Max Nettlau, the anarchist movement's own dedicated historian, found no trace of a translation of Proudhon's writings in the 1840s[2]. The response in Britain to Warren's and Proudhon's ideas was slightly more extensive in the 1850s: articles relating to them appeared in The Leader in 1850-52 and in a couple of other journals later on. According to Nettlau, the first British association to display some anarchist tendencies was the London Confederation of Rational Reformers (founded in 1853), which was composed of seceders from J. Bronterre O'Brien's National Reform League (1849-74)[3]. A.C. Cuddon, one of the Confederation's secretaries, paid a visit to Warren's American communities called 'Modern Times' and 'Utopia' in 1857, and wrote articles with anarchist leanings for The Cosmopolitan Review in 1861 and 1862 and for The Working Man[4]. The O'Brienite, George E. Harris, secretary of The Working Man, was another friend and correspondent of Warren's whose views contained anarchist tendencies[5].

In 1864, the International Workingmen's Association was founded providing a much-needed arena for exchange of views and for political activity by anarchists and other socialists. The high status and popularity which the

1. James J. Martin, Men Against the State (Colorado Springs, 1970), p. 88. Warren inspired communal settlements and other enterprises in which cost price was the basis for exchanging goods.
2. Freedom, Nov.-Dec. 1905. Dr. Max Nettlau (1865-1944), an Austrian expert on Celtic languages and a collector of material connected with the labour movement and with anarchism was acquainted with British anarchism from its early days in the mid 1880s. A regular visitor to London he was first a member of the Socialist League (S.L.). and from 1895 of the Freedom Group. (see below). For a short biographical sketch see Rudolph Rocker, The London Years (London, 1956), pp. 92-95.
3. O'Brien himself became an adherent of Warren's cost theory.
4. Freedom, Nov.-Dec., 1905.
5. See The Working Man, 4 May 1867. The reference is taken from Stan Shipley, Club Life and Socialism in Mid-Victorian London (Oxford, 1971), p. 7.

followers of Proudhon and later Bakunin enjoyed in this body did not alter the situation in Britain in favour of anarchism in any real sense. In fact, the British members of the International, most of whom were important trade union leaders, stood behind Marx, the anarchists' most vehement opponent, and helped to render him almost totally victorious in his fight with the followers of Proudhon. The later switch by the surviving British representatives after the Paris Commune (1871) to back the anarchists - most of them now led by Bakunin - was not a token of an ideological affinity. Rather, it was the outcome of their own fight against what they saw as the increasingly centralist tendencies of the General Council of the International, headed by Marx. The anarchists' federalist position and their insistence on branch autonomy formed the basis for the new alliance.

Two British delegates - Hales and Eccarius - took part in the exclusively anarchist congress of the International convened in Geneva in 1873, a year after the collapse of the broader International. This co-operation signified no ideological rapprochement. On the contrary, Hales, who had been first the secretary of the Geneva Council of the International and then the secretary of the British Federal Council of the International, actually equated anarchism with individualism which he saw as "the basis of the existing state of society which we want to overthrow"[1]. Eccarius was the only British delegate to attend the next anarchist congress in Brussels (1874). His attendance served only to demonstrate the lack of common ground for further collaboration. He opposed the resolutions and was the last delegate from Britain to participate in anarchist congresses in the '70s. This short-lived and ephemeral liaison between a few trade unionists and international anarchism left little impression on either.

Circumstances in Britain before the 1880s were not, on the whole, conducive to the growth of revolutionary

1. Henry Collins and Chimen Abramsky, Karl Marx and the British Labour Movement (London, 1965), p. 280.

theories. The Chartist movement and its spirit had been crushed. Few early socialists survived. The co-operatives focused increasingly on advancing their own interests, and the radical movement demanded principally the extension of the franchise and the promotion of republicanism, secularism and Irish Home Rule - all causes designed to improve the system and not necessarily to change it. The trade unions became gradually subservient to Liberal politics, while the working class, by and large, tended to put its faith in the efficacy of self-help and bourgeois good will. Periods of economic prosperity reinforced the conviction that progress would ultimately bring material benefits to all, thus undermining the impetus towards a far-reaching change in the nature of society. Given this state of affairs, anarchism, demanding as it did the complete reordering of the social structure, had little prospect of striking a chord in political circles.

The '80s, however, unleashed social and cultural conflicts which had hitherto lain dormant. The economic depression which had started in 1875 and reached its trough in 1879 generated an ever more militant mood in radical circles. Formerly accepted norms and values began to be questioned and partial solutions rejected by an increasing number of people. Progress was no longer universally held to be eternal and necessarily a bringer of greater good. The depression was increasingly regarded by some radicals not as a passing malaise but as symptomatic of the failure of the capitalist system, which was no longer able to solve the numerous economic and social problems of the time. The preoccupations of the radical movement ceased to satisfy those who now believed that the whole system was in urgent need of replacement. They now began to cast about for alternatives, seeking a consistent ideological terrain on which to express their discontent. Some became backward looking while others envisaged new social models. In their search a few radicals lighted on the anarchist doctrine of change. From then on, anarchism in one form or another was seen as a viable alternative to the current system, if

only by a handful of British citizens.

The schools of thought that began to acquire currency in the 1880s were, partly due to the paucity of indigenous anarchist literature, those that had been cultivated abroad in the last four decades or more. Subsequently, too, the movement was inspired by continental and American anarchist thinking. In consequence, the theoretical foundation of the anarchist sects that grew in Britain was imbued with analysis and terminology that had germinated in or reacted to conditions in another soil. However, this foreign influence was not solely projected from across the seas or indirectly through translated anarchist literature. Nor did it manifest itself only in the assimilation of imported dogmas. The unique position of Britain as the traditional sanctuary for political fugitives and the growing suppression of anarchism on the continent drew anarchists from almost every corner of Europe to London, in particular. Their presence was to affect and colour the development of British anarchism in a variety of ways.

A sizable influx of anarchists came in the aftermath of the 1871 Paris Commune and the enactment in 1878 of the German anti-socialist laws. In 1884 the immigrant colony swelled with German-speaking anarchists when Switzerland closed its doors to revolutionaries. The introduction of repressive laws in France in 1894, following the perpetration of an increasing number of individual acts of terrorism, sent new surges of refugees to England. The ranks expanded again with the growth of anarchist repression in Spain and Italy in the late 19th century, and in Tsarist Russia, especially after the failure of the 1905 revolution. Apart from these peak periods of repression, refugees constantly trickled into Britain - the one place which never ceased to allow them entry.

A fair number of the refugees remained permanently in Britain: some returned home as soon as it was safe to do so; others periodically came and went. However long they stayed and however much they learnt from their experiences in Britain, they tended to keep themselves apart from

British politics and society. As political refugees, their commitment was to the homeland they had been forced to leave. Therein lay their interest. The many foreign publications which were printed in London - the German Freiheit, Der Rebell, Die Autonomie and Der Lumpen Proletarien, the Italian Bolletino Socialista Rivoluzionaria and L'Associaz one, the French La Tribune Libre and Le Père Peinard and the Russian Lestki Chlieb i Volya, and a number of others, principally discussed and related to affairs in the home country. Activity was largely geared to effect changes in their respective countries, and the revolutionary literature they produced was intended not only for distribution among their compatriots in London, but above all to be smuggled into the countries where such propaganda material was outlawed. The emigré community, a collection of radical wayfarers, constituted a forum for encounters and the cross-fertilisation of views among prominent revolutionaries from different countries, providing thereby the interest and stimulus to keep them intellectually satisfied, and therefore self-sufficient.

But the seclusion of the foreign colony was a need as well as a choice. It was only natural that the refugees kept to themselves given that they faced a hostile society from which they were invariably alienated both in spirit and in practice. Either they worked in grinding conditions or they were without work altogether. They also had to contend with the problem of language and indeed of social adaptation in general. "They lived for the most part their own separate lives, segregated in their own streets, speaking their own language, following their own occupations"[1]. The different nationalities congregated in their own clubs. There were German, Italian, French, Scandinavian and Russian-speaking clubs, each a microcosm of the revolutionary milieu in their countries of origin. Each club was open, however, to other national groups and close links were maintained among the frequenters of the different haunts.

1. Rocker, The London Years, p. 68.

This mode of existence of the foreign anarchists and their principal preoccupations varied very little up to the First World War until their "children who were born in England became completely angilcised"[1].

The self-absorption and insularity of the refugees did not stand in the way of co-operation with the native anarchists of revolutionary persuasion. The ideological ground they shared offered scope for the common pursuit of the revolutionary task and facilitated social interaction. For its part, the British movement was greatly enriched by its association with comrades from across the seas. In fact, very few anarchist enterprises did not bear the imprint of some foreign involvement, particularly before the close of the 20th century. The foreign colony constituted a reservoir which regularly refuelled local energy. Whether intermittently bolstering undertakings or forming an integral component of a group, foreigners attended meetings, spoke from anarchist platforms, distributed propaganda literature and rendered assiduous assistance to the finances of papers and groups. Continental literatti constantly benefited the indigenous publishing industry. Reunions, celebrations and conferences were often conducted jointly. The foreign clubs occasionally played host to indigenous activity and their premises served as rendezvous for British anarchists in need of fraternisation.

Moreover, anarchist refugees injected the movement, which lacked native thinkers of high calibre, with periodical transfusions of new ideas, thereby enhancing its foreign ideological basis. Living in England or paying fleeting visits, celebrated anarchists such as Kropotkin, Malatesta, the brothers Reclus, Louise Michel, Emil Pouget, Jean Grave, Max Nettlau, Lorenzo Portet and Tarrida Del Marmol, Emma Goldman and Vol tairine de Cleyre, and many others, fed, fashioned or reformulated theoretical stands of the native anarchists. Alongside them, the less well-known foreign anarchists enlivened the local cadres with the avant-garde ideas current in their own homelands. Indeed, few

1. Ibid., p. 69.

anarchist movements evolved under such a weight of foreign influence as British anarchism.

However, it would be untrue to say that the sojourn of foreign anarchists in Britain worked only to the advantage of the native movement. In fact, the foreign influence simultaneously impeded the active movement's advance and left a lasting slur on its reputation. Their revolutionary aspiration being the raison d'être of the presence of political refugees in London, their meeting places were pervaded by a militant spirit. Their clubs were hothouses for the planning of revolutionary operations in their homelands and sources of inflammatory literature. Deprived of political outlets for their ambitions and frustrated with the oppressive situation in their homelands, some foreigners compensated for the lack of action with a surfeit of revolutionary loquacity. The wild talk sometimes took the form of squabbling and mutual abuse, and even extended to cut-throat battles and theft within the ranks[1]. Add to this that almost all operations in England involving the use or planned use of bombs were executed by or involved foreigners plus the fact that some of the outrages carried out abroad were rumoured to have originated in the very London clubs which they haunted[2], it is understood why a violent picture of the foreign circles was created, which fully fitted the anarchist image transmitted from overseas. This aura of violence rubbed off on the indigenous anarchists and proved highly detrimental to their image.

As can be seen from the above, the dynamics of the British movement cannot be properly grasped without an understanding of the influence, be it constructive or destructive, of the foreign anarchists. However, a full chronicling of the truly international anarchist movement that existed in Britain and its impact on the indigenous movement is beyond the scope of this study. It would, in fact, require full and separate treatment. Since the major concern of

1. For an illustration of this atmosphere in the London German colony see Andrew R. Carlson, Anarchism in Germany Vol. 1. (Metuchen, 1972).
2. J.C. Longoni, Four Patients of Dr. Deibler (London, 1970), p. 146.

this thesis is with home-grown anarchism, its profile will be supplemented by only occasional reference to foreign anarchists.

Besides, and most importantly, for all the influence of foreign ideas and personalities, British anarchism acquired its own character and colour. Although the general theoretical lines originated elsewhere, the flexibility of anarchist philosophy was such that its arguments were open to various interpretations. While it is true that the development of the British movement owed a lot to the adaptation of foreign dogmas to the conditions and circumstances peculiar to British soil , its nature, stresses and preferences were the outgrowth of British cultural values, recognised patterns of political behaviour and the fluctuating relationship between the British establishment and any dissenting group. In addition, the movement derived some of its strength and inspiration from native libertarian traditions, and a number of its adherents fashioned original theoretical combinations. The foreign anarchists who contributed to its development also accommodated themselves in the main to locally prevailing conditions and several of them even modified their opinions under the impact of their experiences in Britain and their consequent understanding of the political mechanisms of change there. Hence, this movement was distinctly British in many respects, evolving differently from anarchist movements elswhere. It is this particular phenomenon of British anarchism which is considered in this thesis.

Notwithstanding its foreign origins, Jewish anarchism will also be examined in this study, but only briefly as it has already been thoroughly investigated by William J. Fishman in Jewish Radicals[1]. Jewish anarchism carried its own distinguishing features which followed from the fact of Jews sharing a similar cultural background and coming up against contemporary adverse circumstances. On the other hand, the life style and concerns of its members - who,

1. William J. Fishman, Jewish Radicals (N.Y., 1974). The English edition is called East End Jewish Radicals.

unlike other foreign anarchists, had mostly left their countries with the intention of never going back - were largely responses to local conditions. For this reason, the evolution of the Jewish movement followed a similar line to that of native anarchism, and it can thus be used to highlight as well as to enlarge on the portrayal of the larger movement. The next chapter will outline the development of the latter through a study of its major streams and groupings.

The year 1881 would appear to be a particularly appropriate date to start the story of British anarchism since it was in that year that anarchist propaganda in Britain first excited great attention generally. More specifically, the events of that year produced the germ of an indigenous group which, although it professed no anarchist affiliation, had been nurtured in an anarchist milieu and gave rise to the pioneers of plebian British anarchism. The ensuing advance of British anarchism, interrupted by a phase of recession, was halted in its tracks by an exogenous factor - the outbreak of the First World War more than thirty years later. The period between 1881 and 1914 thus formed a distinct chapter in the chronicles of anarchism in Britain.

This period can be divided into four approximate phases: the first from 1881 to 1886; the second from 1886 to 1896; the third from 1897 to 1906 and the fourth from 1906 to 1914. These divisions are somewhat arbitrary but they are meaningful in as much as each period signified a stage in the development of anarchism. The years 1881-86 constituted a preparatory phase for British anarchism, laying the groundwork for an anarchist movement. These years saw the gradual consolidation of eclectic anarchist viewpoints into theoretical wholes, their incursion into left radical circles and the first attempts at organised propaganda. The second period opened with the organisation of a permanent anarchist group after which anarchism gradually developed from a single operating group into a

national movement, encompassing many groups and propaganda agencies of various kinds, working with each other or in collaboration with other socialist[1] and radical bodies and individuals. The end of this period saw a drastic decline in the extent and intensity of activity and the growing isolation of the anarchists in the socialist camp. In the third period, anarchist activity was almost reduced to paralysis, both through internal weaknesses and because of extraneous circumstances. This period was succeeded by one of renewed activity, feeding off the growth of syndicalism. However, it was arrested in 1914.

1. Throughout this thesis, socialism is used to indicate the movement as a whole, including its variant anarchism, except when it is clear from the context that anarchism is specifically excluded.

PART ONE: Reality.

1. The Evolution of British Anarchism.
2. A Profile of the Movement.
3. Anarchism and the Socialist Movement.

CHAPTER ONE. THE EVOLUTION OF BRITISH ANARCHISM 1881-86

In March 1881 a native group took upon itself the defence of Johann Most, the German editor of an anarchist paper, against prosecution by the British police. It is to this event that the origin of British anarchism may be traced. Admittedly, this step signified no ideological identification. Seen in some quarters as an attack on freedom of speech, the prosecution rallied against it radicals with no particular sympathy to the anarchist cause. The group itself included individuals such as Edwin Dunn, Jack Williams and Charles Murray who were soon to be the staunch supporters of anarchism's chief enemy in the socialist camp - the Socialist Democratic Federation (SDF). Yet it was also the case that three of the leading activists in this affair, Frank Kitz, Ambrose Barker and Joseph Lane - who excelled in the vigour with which they defended the action - were largely responsible for the later introduction of anarchist sentiments into the Labour movement[1]. The anarchism of each of them only gradually

1. All three were left wing radicals with particular interest in workers' revolutionary politics. Lane (b. 1850) had already participated in political meetings in his native Oxfordshire. When only fifteen he came to London. There he participated in meetings of the British Section of the International and of the Manhood Suffrage League (formerly the Democratic Trades and Alliance Association); helped together with other democrats in the stone masons' strike and fought for the republican cause. In 1878 he settled in Marylebone where he became a radicalising element through the Marylebone Radical Association (Lane's memoirs, Unpublished MS. [Nettlau Collection (N.C.)]. For a biographical sketch see Freedom, Oct. 1934). Kitz (1848-1923) allied himself from his early youth with veteran members of the Chartist movement and the First International. He participated in demonstrations by the Reform League and helped to set up the Manhood Suffrage League. He, too, became a member of the Marylebone Radical Association, and added his voice to the protest against the government's behaviour in Ireland. Both were deeply interested in the land agitation of the time, an interest which proved to be life-long. As late as Jan. 1912 Lane wrote and published a leaflet entitled The Land Question. (For Kitz's memoirs see Freedom, Jan. to July 1912 and for a biographical sketch Justice 18 Jan. 1923). Barker grew up in a Chartist and republican household and himself became involved in the National Secular Society. In 1880 he helped to lead the breakaway from the local branch which produced the Stratford Dialectical and Radical Club. (Shipley, Club Life, p. 36).

came to take on a definite form, but even then they tended to refer to themselves as anti-statist (Lane), international revolutionary socialist (Kitz) or revolutionary socialist (Barker), rather than anarchist. Nevertheless, anarchism was soon to be their distinct message, and their role in defending Freiheit undoubtedly provided a formative experience to this end.

The group was initiated in its original form in the late 1870s by Kitz, at the urging of the German revolutionary John Neve, and was to become the English Section of the German Social Democratic Club in Rose Street, Soho. The club came into being in 1877 with the unification of the Lassalian and marxist factions in London, and was to become the centre for foreign revolutionaries of various persuasions and origins as well as for local ultra-radicals[1]. Thus poised, it served as a bridge between the foreign and local radical communities, fostering intimate contact and exchange of ideas[2]. Anyone visiting the club would have encountered the European revolutionary world in miniature - its thought, atmosphere and ethos. Such visitors would have witnessed volatile and polemical debates about the aims and means of socialism, of the kind which had split asunder revolutionary parties and groups abroad. In the process, they also would have heard anarchist as well as anti-anarchist pleadings. Being also active in the indigenous radical groups which accommodated the most revolutionary elements in society, the group's members were exposed to what little anarchism was circulating in the country[3].

The arrival of Johann Most (1846-1906), the leader of the ultra revolutionary faction of the German SPD, in December 1878 was to set the club on an anarchist course[4]. Most was not yet a declared anarchist on his arrival. He

1. The club was originally founded by German refugees in 1848.
2. The son of a German exile and himself fluent in German, Kitz frequently spoke at the club and served as the interpreter for the English Section.
3. For their activities in local politics see Kitz's recollections in Freedom, March 1912.
4. Before he came to England, Most, a bookbinder by trade, was an unremitting socialist propagandist in Austria and Germany. He was the editor of socialist papers, and represented the SPD in the Reichstag. Between these activities he saw the inside of prisons in both countries, and was known to have been harshly treated. For biographical details see Freedom, April/May 1906.

came to Britain intent on inspiring illegal agitation in Germany at a time when Bismarck's anti-socialist laws were in full operation. Still a member of the SPD, his approach was to challenge the party's preoccupation with low-key survival. However, the obvious impotence of the German Reichstag to effect any of its proposals, together with his own frustrating experience as a deputy and the SPD's moderation, combined to turn him ever more strongly against parliamentary tactics and to convince him of the desirability of extra-legal, violent means. Bakunin's relentless advocacy of revolutionary undertakings accorded perfectly with Most's conceptions. He was also won over by Bakunin's collectivist-anarchism. But it was not until his expulsion from the SPD in the summer of 1880, that Most's anarchism became more sharply pronounced.

With "a fund of unmistakable energy"[1], Most spurred the club's members into greater and more diverse activity than ever before. Shortly after his arrival, on 4 January 1879, the first issue of the German paper Freiheit came out. The paper's views developed in tandem with his own and became an anarchist mouthpiece. Under Most's direction, some of the German members of the club organised the smuggling of the paper and other revolutionary literature across the German border. Most also managed to prevail upon the social democratic members to quit the club, thereby making it a stronghold of anarchism. "There was life and spirit in this propaganda as seldom in a movement"[2]. The presence of this experienced and temperamental revolutionary gave cohesion to the anarchist-inclined elements in the club and solidified their ideological convictions. It was only natural that some of the English frequenters of the club, however reserved in the face of his impassioned oratory, were intrigued and stirred by the content of his arguments.

Through Freiheit, Most called for the implementation of 'propaganda by deed' and for the violent destruction of the system. When, on 19 March 1881, he published an article

1. Belfort E. Bax, Reminiscences and Reflexions of a Mid and Late Victorian (London, 1918), p. 41.
2. Freedom, April 1906.

condoning the assassination of the Russian Tsar a few days before, the police descended on him. At his trial he was charged with libelling the Tsar and incitement to murder[1]. It was through the force of these circumstances that the English Section of the club found itself at the forefront of a campaign promoting an anarchist issue. With the help of the club's German members, the English Section formed a defence committee, issued a manifesto, and organised protest meetings. It also took over the publication of an English edition of Freiheit[2]. Barker was the chairman of the defence committee, and Kitz the editor of the paper, the seven editions of which appeared between 24 April and 5 June 1881. Although the paper reflected issues of interest to anarchists, it was not a specifically anarchist paper. Lane participated in both initiatives.

The English Section's exertions did not help Most's defence much. The court sentenced him to eighteen months imprisonment with hard labour. Upon his release in October 1882 he moved to America. His influence on the native ranks was thenceforth through his literature only[3]. After Most's departure, Bakunin's collectivist-anarchism survived for a while in Britain as an enclave amidst Most's German followers. Apart from this, consistent with developments in anarchist camps almost world-wide, communist-anarchism came to be the most widely accepted version of anarchism in Britain.

Also in 1881, the pioneering but as yet unavowed anarchists had another occasion to learn about anarchism. Between 14 and 19 July, an international revolutionary congress met in London. Bringing together anarchists from all over the world the event furnished a platform for the opinions most current in anarchist circles[4]. The shortage

1. For details see The Times, 8 April 1881.
2. The German edition was carried by Most's disciples John Neve and the compositors Schwelm and Merten. Their approbation of the assassination of Lord Frederick Cavendish in Phoenix Park again brought prosecution upon Freiheit. In the summer of 1882 the paper moved to Switzerland.
3. His writings were to be translated into both English and Yiddish and see several editions.
4. Among those present were Kropotkin, Malatesta, Louise Michel from France, the American Marie le Compte and the Austrian Josef Peukert.

of anarchist literature in the English language was compensated for by the direct exposure to anarchism's most impressive exponents. Joseph Lane was present in the congress in his capacity as a representative of the Homerton Social Democratic Club and Kitz as a representative of the Rose Street Club.

The revolutionary stance in the early 1880s was no longer confined to the foreign milieu and a handful of native bodies as in the 1870s but gained an increasing number of supporters. This development manifested itself in the mushrooming of working men's groups and clubs devoted to the socialist ideal. Kitz, Barker and Lane helped by James Harragan, Sam Mainwaring, Charles Mowbray and James Blackwell - whose paths had led or were soon to lead them to anarchism - were prime instigators of this process[1]. In mid 1881 radicals and socialists gathered to launch the Democratic Federation (after 1884 known as the Social Democratic Federation). Lane was one of the first to be approached to give it a hand[2]. He, however, preferred independent agitation among the proletarian sections of the population in the East End of London, and with Harragan's help formed the Homerton Social Democratic Club there in 1881. Kitz was to be one of the lecturers at the club. Barker became the secretary of the Stratford Radical and Dialectical Club, the "most advanced of the working men's clubs in East London"[3]. From this club grew the Labour Emancipation League (LEL) in 1882 with Joseph Lane as its moving spirit. Barker, Mowbray, Mainwaring, Harragan and Blackwell were active members, and Kitz was a close associate. Branches of the League soon appeared in the depressed areas of North and East London and penetrated into Central and West London.

1. Harragan (pseudonym Spartacus) alone among the personalities mentioned here adopted the Proudhonist position. (For a biographical sketch see Freedom April 1934). The others opted for the communist-anarchist variety. All except Blackwell were later to join the Socialist League. Lane left the S.L. in 1889 and Kitz in 1891, but both intermittently kept in touch with the anarchist caucus in London. (For a biographical sketch of Mainwaring see Freedom, May 1934).
2. For Lane's relationship with the Democratic Federation see ch. 3 pp. 158-60.
3. G.D.H. Cole, British Working Class Politics (London, 1941), p. 85.

The aim of the participants in the English Section and the LEL was "to permeate the mass of the people with a spirit of revolt against their oppressors and against the squalid misery which result from their monopoly of the means of life"[1]. To achieve this aim they lectured on and from the point of view of socialism and also engaged other lecturers with revolutionary propositions[2]. Some of these lecturers were visiting anarchists. For example, Marie le Compte and Kropotkin lectured to the Homerton Social Democratic Club and to the Stratford Radical and Dialectical Club. Kropotkin also lectured to other radical clubs across the country between the winters of 1881 and 1882 . The agitators addressed audiences in popular spots like Mile End Waste and Victoria Park, and led demonstrations which took up burning issues such as the Government's oppressive laws in Ireland and its policy on emigration. They collected money through concerts and lotteries, with which they purchased some printing materials, and distributed lucid and simply-worded leaflets - most of which they had printed and even written themselves. The endemic economic situation was emphatically analysed in their literature in terms of the class struggle[3].

Their agitation also took more demonstrative forms. Under the impact of the No Rent Campaign in Ireland, Kitz, Lane, Harragan and some other comrades declared an anti-landlord campaign. To encourage the inhabitants to take part, they published reports about slums, revealed the names of unscrupulous landlords, and issued pamphlets about the land laws. In this connection, an ad hoc body, the Local Rights Association for Rental and Sanitary Reform, was established.

1. Freedom, April 1912.
2. Lists of lectures at Stratford Radical and Dialectical Club in the winter of 1881 reveal the following topics: the French School of social economics; British commerce in labour and its relation to foreign competition ; socialism, peers and people; agricultural labourers and co-operation; revolutionary movements in France and Germany; Mazzini; wealth and capital, etc. (The lists are to be found in N.C.).
3. Kitz and his group published leaflets with the titles "Fight or Starve", "The Revenge", "Are We Over-Populated?" and "Appeal to the Army, Navy and Police". (Freedom, April 1912). Lane published "The Starvation Army", "The Emigration Fraud" and other leaflets (Freedom, Oct. 1934).

True to their principles, Kitz and his group themselves demonstrated the steps to be taken by refusing to pay rent to the landlords of the halls where they met or the house where they printed their propaganda.

The international revolutionary socialism that was preached by these crusading spirits was steeped in anarchist notions, if sometimes also in ideas incompatible with them, like the demand for adult suffrage which formed part of the programme of the LEL. Renunciation of parliamentary action and government in general were simultaneously pronounced. Their mode of action, too, was typical of anarchist agitation: propaganda was conducted through autonomous localised grass-roots bodies without formal leaders or procedures and militant action was urged, upon sometimes unsympathetic crowds, and even initiated. According to Lane, the LEL was indeed called anarchist because of its beliefs and manner of operation[1].

Admittedly, at this embryonic stage of British socialism, all revolutionaries aired similar views and operated in similar fashion, but the outlook of some of them, in fact if not in name, was beginning to take a more consistent anarchist form. Mowbray would remain antagonistic to anarchism until the latter part of the decade[2], and Blackwell would stay on for a while in the Marxist SDF. But it was the LEL, guided by Lane, which used its weight to drive the SDF, to which it had affiliated in 1884, towards temporary anti-parliamentarianism - a necessary component of an anarchist standpoint. When the SDF finally split in December 1884 largely on this issue, the LEL went along with, and in fact had a hand in orchestrating, the breakway faction, the Socialist League. Kitz's group joined the S.L. soon after its emergence, precisely because of its "propagandist and non-Parliamentary objects"[3]. Harragan "advocated and defended the principles of Anarcy"

1. Lane's memoirs. [N.C.]
2. In 1887, Mowbray still intended "to crush" the anarchist influence in the Norwich branch of the S.L. Letter to the Council of the League, 10 Nov. 1887. [S.L. Archives in the International Institute of Social History. Amsterdam. (I.I.S.H.)].
3. Freedom, April 1912.

from the time he left the First International in 1872[1]. William Morris, who led the split from the SDF, indeed noted at the time that most of the East End members of the new S.L. were "tinged with anarchism"[2].

Based in poverty-stricken areas and addressing themselves mostly to working people, these early prophets of anarchism were in a position to transmit to the needy, the unemployed and the destitute what they had heard from foreign anarchists or formulated themselves. Thus, while rarely possessing the greatest anarchist literary talents, the tireless propagandists of street corners and public parks - in this period and subsequently - were responsible for the verbal communication of anarchist tenets and methods to the proletarian sections of London's population. The groups, clubs and localities within which such ideas circulated did not adopt anarchism en masse, but an undercurrent of sympathy for anarchism was created in certain circles from which the future recruits to the anarchist groups presumably came.

During the same period, anarchism began to enjoy something of a vogue in certain middle-class radical circles. Contact by these individuals with foreign revolutionaries and the odd piece of anarchist literature circulating in English - notably Benjamin Tucker's Boston-published Liberty - created an initial interest. Events involving anarchists which captured newspaper headlines served to enhance this interest. In this latter connection, the Lyons trial (January 1883) in France was an important milestone as it drew much positive attention to the anarchist creed. Sympathy for the 65 anarchists charged at the trial with membership of an international anarchist organisation whose goal was the destruction of the state was natural to circles where commitment to international revolutionism was already strong. The International Socialist Federation activated by Lane indeed issued the communist-anarchist manifesto of the Lyons anarchists on 23 January 1883 and opened subscriptions for

1. The Anarchist, Oct. 1885.
2. Letter to Joynes, 3 Feb. 1885. [British Museum Additional Manuscripts (B.M. ADD. MS). 45345.]

their families. Yet the trial gave the movement wider fame and attracted some more people to the anarchist cause. The fact that Kropotkin was one of the accused cloaked the trial in some respectability and no doubt accounts for at least some of the fervour with which several prominent English personalities jumped to his defence.

Interest in Kropotkin in English circles continued while he served his sentence in France (January 1883 - January 1886). Of those who established contact with him, two were before long self-professed anarchists, doing their utmost to advance the cause of anarchism, although of different streams. One was Charlotte Wilson who was to promote communist-anarchism of a somewhat more moderate sort than the proletarian communist-anarchism that was to develop in the S.L. The other was Henry Seymour who was to pioneer individualist-anarchism.

Charlotte Wilson (born 1854), the wife of a Hampstead stockbroker and a dynamic intellectual hostess, spared no effort to win more ground for anarchism[1]. She organised lectures and initiated discussion sessions where the study of anarchist teachings gained prominence[2]. The nascent Fabian Society saw her assiduous efforts to steer it along anarchist lines. Important socialist papers carried a number of her articles expounding the communist-anarchist position. These disclosed Kropotkin's impact and her studious reading of the Lyons manifesto. Based on "free and voluntary association of workers", the ideal society she conjured up allowed no private property and apportioned the commonly produced goods according to needs and not labour[3]. Her activity must have enhanced interest among others in the idealogy.

Henry Seymour, a keen explorer of radical political

1. For a biographical sketch see Nicolas Walter, Introd., Three Essays on Anarchism, by Charlotte Wilson (Orkney, 1979).
2. For a description of these meetings see Margaret Olivier, ed., Sydney Olivier (London, 1948) p. 77.
3. Justice, 8/22/29 Nov.; 6 Dec. 1884. See also The Practical Socialist, Jan. 1886.

thought, came across anarchist writings in his studies and found in them an echo of his aspirations[1]. Tucker's Liberty proved a seminal and productive influence on him. With only minor exceptions, Seymour's early publications in particular bore the mark of much of Liberty's ideological orientation, arguments, interests and even style and tone. As early as 1883 Seymour published Tucker's translation of Bakunin's God and the State - the first edition published in England.

Seymour was the organiser of the Tunbridge Wells Secular Society and the owner of the Science Library. His association with radicalism critically harmed his business, and in 1885 he moved to London and started up the International Publishing Company there, through which he launched the first acknowledged anarchist paper The Anarchist. Thus began his long career as an anarchist propagandist.

Being determined and diligent, Seymour lost little time. In less than two years he provided the hitherto largely uninformed public with a series of pamphlets containing the writings of the leading anarchist theoreticians. Pamphlets by Proudhon, Bakunin, Kropotkin, Elisée Reclus, Lysander Spooner, and W.B. Green appeared in quick succession[2]. Alongside their thoughts he ranged pamphlets containing his own. In a consistent manner, The Anarchist, too, was open to exposition of anarchist schools different from his own. However, the position of the paper was distinctly individualist-anarchist - a synthesis of Proudhon's mutualism and the American anti-statist tradition, spanning from Josiah Warren to Benjamin Tucker. In the wide spectrum of anarchist opinion, it held an intermediate position between communist-anarchism which ranked the concepts of solidarity and mutual aid on a level with the promotion of individual needs, and the extreme individual-

1. Despite a strictly religious background, Seymour (b. 1860) was converted to freethinking upon reading Voltaire and Thomas Paine. In 1882 he was prosecuted for blasphemy. For a biographical sketch see The Labour Annual (1899), p. 162.
2. A full list is provided in The Anarchist, Sept. 1886.

istic philosophy of Max Stirner for whom the life of the individual posed primarily existential and matephysical problems to be solved by the individual in isolation from social change.

The first editorial of The Anarchist - defined as "a journal of anti-political socialism"- proclaimed the message to be propounded by the individualist-anarchists[1]. First candidate for the pillory was to be the state, while individual liberty, its most affflicted victim, was to be continually championed. Seymour promised to attack monopoly, privilege and authority - the elements that crippled or thwarted the development towards individual sovereignty and "self-governed social organisation" - and particularly reviled the state monopoly of "the medium of exchange". Outside the economic sphere, Seymour set out to assert "the right of private judgement in morals, and mercilessly expose the political, theological and social superstitions of our time". The delusion of representative government, the ballot box and majority rule were also to be exposed.

The first issue of the journal revealed that to the mind of the individualist-anarchists the economic system most appropriate to a free and egalitarian society must be grounded in free access to all the means of production, free choice of currency and free competition. Such a system, it was made clear, could only operate in a society from which the corroding factors of rent, interest and taxes, or any other monopoly or privilege, had been extirpated. Politically, a primary obstacle was to be removed with the abolition of the state. The social relationship most recommended by the individualist-anarchists was based on the "principles of voluntary as opposed to compulsory co-operation".

Initially, Seymour's paper stimulated a measure of interest in various radical circles both in England and abroad. In May 1885 the paper reported that an anarchist group was meeting in the paper's office to discuss social

1. The Anarchist, March 1885.

topics and propaganda. News of the paper's inception reached the emigré community and received a warm welcome from the French-Speaking International Anarchist Circle of London[1]. Bernard Shaw and Edward Pease (Fabian Society), W.J. Clark (S.L.), Elisée Reclus, Henry Appleton (American individualist-anarchist), Henry Glasse (South-African communist-anarchist), A. Andrade (Australian individualist-anarchist), Henry Kelly (American communist-anarchist) and a handful of other people responded and wrote to the paper. The number of anarchist papers Seymour received from abroad was an indication of the extent of his connections in the anarchist world. The paper was thus a focal point for those then interested in anarchism, acting as a forum for a wide range of views.

Quite independently from anarchist advance in Britain, anarchist ideas began to circulate in the Jewish community of London's East End, having been brought over together with other socialist currents directly from Eastern Europe by Jews arriving in the wake of successive waves of persecution. However, these imported notions acquired the local colour of the Jewish immigrant community first in London and then also in the provinces.

Signs of anarchism had already surfaced in the London Jewish community in 1876 with the first Hebrew Socialist Union organised by Aron Lieberman (1844-80) who, like most of the members, had come to England from Russia. The Union was not in any way an official anarchist group but an anarchist spirit pervaded it right from the beginning. The meetings were carefully conducted with little regulation or procedural rigidity, and its mentor Lieberman - believing anarchy to be in the Jewish social tradition - spoke about it as their chief objective[2]. Although the group disbanded within a year and was therefore of no lasting consequence, in retrospect it can be seen to have

1. Ibid.
2. Fishman, p. 114. Later Lieberman established contacts with Most and in 1879, when back in London, associated with the German anarchists in Rose Street Club, contributing articles to Freiheit. In 1880 he committed suicide in America.

been the prototype of the anarchist groups that later were to develop in the Jewish community. While constantly delving into socialist studies, the group set itself a two-fold target: to popularise its ideas among the Jewish masses and to organise the Jewish worker - tasks that their successors would enthusiastically undertake.

As in indigenous socialist circles, firm boundaries between anarchism and other socialist strands were not yet clear in the Jewish milieu in the early and middle 1880s. Anarchist, social democratic and other socialist viewpoints coexisted in the same revolutionary circles which coalesced around two enterprises. One rallying point was the International Workers' Educational Club at 40 Berner Street launched in 1884, and the other was the Yiddish paper the Arbeter Fraint (The Worker's Friend)founded in 1885 by the poet Morris Winchevsky. Though not exclusively under anarchist control, both were the channels for communicating anarchism to the Jewish public in the East End. An article entitled "What is Anarchy", written by the Jewish anarchist J. Jaffe, appeared as early as November 1885 in the Arbeter Fraint. The ideas contained in it would be increasingly voiced in the club and the paper.

1886-96

Anarchism thus steadily penetrated the political map of the radical left and also became a topical subject in areas beyond. Much of the interest was however eclectic and non-committed, and partisan opinion was sporadic, at best existing in organisational frameworks which also included hostile points of view like the Arbeter Fraint Group, the SDF, the Fabian Society and the S.L. The anarchist nucleus of the latter was influential in the League's London-based General Council, and through its branches was gradually acquiring a foothold in some of the provinces as well. But the anarchist nucleus in the League was not yet decisive, cohesive or at all explicit about its anarchist commitment. Seymour's exertions, though occasionally assisted by a few individuals, were on the whole solitary pursuits. Against this background, the

year 1886 registered a turning point in the history of British anarchism. It was then that the organisational vacuum was filled by a coterie of middle-class intellectuals who called themselves the Freedom Group. Only with the coalescence of this group into an avowed channel for the exclusive dissemination of anarchism did systematic anarchist propaganda begin.

The initiation of this group marked the inception of an anarchist movement in Britain. This was not merely because an acknowledged anarchist group came into being for the first time but also because the group itself was to leave its stamp on the course of British anarchism in many respects. While other anarchist groups and papers would come and go, this London-based group and its paper Freedom were to survive the reverses that befell the movement. True, by accommodating the more literate and moderate elements, it became a sort of elitist, semi-closed club frequently criticised by other anarchists. Yet for all the accusations levelled against it, the group by and large functioned as a cohesive factor, both from an organisational point of view - as in the early 1890s when it became the focus of a loose aggregation of independent communist-anarchist groups - and on the psychological level: in every phase of anarchist activity and under all circumstances, the group and paper were there to remind the anarchists that anarchism still had the breath of life, and this must have had the effect of sustaining their morale at the most depressing times. Moreover, Freedom became the intellectual guide of the movement, held in equally high regard by people within and outside[1]. It was, alongside the other literature published by the group, the most substantial and regular weapon of anarchist propaganda, at times serving the propaganda needs of other socialist groups as well. Lastly, it appears that the group epitomised the general direction and spirit that ruled British anarchism as a whole.

The evolution of the group from a barely known society in which anarchism was discussed by sympathisers and non-

1. The Referee alluded to Freedom as "a gentlemanly and cultured sheet, which puts its case with considerable literary skill and undeniable earnestness" (24 July 1892).

sympathisers alike, into an enduring local agency of anarchist propaganda would perhaps not have been possible but for the arrival of Kropotkin in England in March 1886 and his immediate involvement in the group's activity. Yet again an outsider invigorated local activity. His association with the group ensured its prominent position ideologically and organisationally. Kropotkin formulated the philosophy of the group - Communist-anarchism - and seemingly also set the style and tone that were to persist in it for many years, even when because of ill health and his growing involvement with Russian revolutionary affairs he steadily distanced himself from the group. It is conjectured that this "group may have been secretive and closed at Kropotkin's insistence, since he was not willing to risk immediately his tenuous position as a recent immigrant with a radical reputation"[1].

It would have been of much more consequence for anarchism, in Nettlau's opinion, if Kropotkin had linked his destiny to the dynamic S.L. - then incorporating "the flower of English revolutionary Socialism, mainly the popular revolutionists with strong Anarchist leanings"[2]. But Hyndman's misrepresentation to Kropotkin of the internal situation of the socialist forces in England, Nettlau argued, and Kropotkin's own overestimation of the marxist influence on the S.L., prevented any such eventuality[3].

It was Charlotte Wilson, the leading spirit of the Freedom Group, who had secured Kropotkin's promise even before his release from the French prison to assist in producing an anarchist paper. When Kropotkin arrived in England, Seymour who had already approached him in prison, was pressed for money and invited the group to use The Anarchist as its platform. The offer was accepted. At a meeting in Stepniak's house, it was decided that the paper would be issued under the joint editorship of Kropotkin, Wilson, Seymour, Dr. Burns-Gibson, the Italian Dr. Merlino and Kropotkin's two Russian friends Stepniak and Chaikovsky[4].

1. Martin A. Miller, Kropotkin, (Chicago, 1976), p. 298. n. 32.
2. Freedom, Feb. 1921.
3. Hyndman was the leader of the SDF from which the S.L. split. For details see ch. 3. pp. 156-60.
4. Freedom Press. 1886-1941 (London, n.d), p. 3.

The first experiment to carry ordered and regulated anarchist propaganda in England was thus the product of a combined operation of natives and foreigners, Proudhonists, communist-anarchists and sympathisers like Kropotkin's friends.

Seymour was willing to make great compromises. In March 1886 the paper advocated straightforward communist-anarchism. The sub-title changed from "a Revolutionary Review" to "Communism and Revolutionism". Seymour personally admitted the acceptance of communist economic principles "unhesitatingly and fearlessly"[1]. In true communist fashion he declared that future articles would be unsigned" thereby allowing the true force of an argument to stand entirely upon its intrinsic merit"[2]. However, it soon became apparent to everyone that this marriage of convenience could not work. The temperamental and ideological differences were irreconcilable. In the June issue all the original features of The Anarchist were restored. Seymour recovered his position as sole editor and his signature was once more printed under his articles. Such close cooperation between these two anarchist streams would not be repeated. Except for a few joint activities, each advanced in its own separate way, but with a major difference. Whereas communist-anarchism, reinforced by Kropotkin's personal presence, formed the mainstream of the anarchist movement in all its major groupings - native, Jewish and foreign - individualist-anarchism was only a fringe group limited to a few disparate individuals. And if individualist-anarchism gained at least some footing in the host community, it was found of little relevance by either the foreigners or the Jews.

The Freedom Group turned to producing a pure mouthpiece of communist-anarchism. The first issue of Freedom appeared in October 1886 and set forth its ideal of positive freedom "which is essentially one with social feeling; of free scope for the social impulses, now distorted and compressed by Property, and its guardian the Law; of free

1. The Anarchist, 20 April 1886.
2. Ibid.

scope for that individual sense of responsibility, of respect for self and for others ... of free scope for the spontaneity and individuality of each human being".

A sanguine disposition ran through Freedom, expressing the mood of the members and Kropotkin. Whatever else might have guided him in the selection of his team, he came to England only reluctantly, there being no plausible alternative. By the time he left prison it was clear that the European countries in which he might have felt at ease, principally Russia and France, were barred to him. Apart from his lack of fluency in English, he still recalled with distaste the loneliness he and his wife suffered when they lived in England for a year from the autumn of 1881, as well as his own previous hopelessness about the advancement of socialism in England. But the realisation that "life in London was no more the dull, vegetating existence that it had been for me four years before" eased the process of his adjustment to his new life[1]. He was now pleased to find a new spirit of hatred and revenge "among the poorer portion of the working population in the outskirts of London" and set out to spread further interest in socialism by lecturing in the major urban and industrial centres of England and Scotland throughout the autumn and winter of 1886 [2].

> "Every night I saw a considerable numbers of people of all classes; and whether it was in the worker's small parlor, or in the reception-room of the wealthy, the most animated discussions went on about socialism and anarchism till a late hour - with hope in the workman's house, with apprehension in the mansion, but everywhere with the same earnestness"[3].

In the course of his lecture tours he realised that the English working classes were in no way interested in general principles and were more prone to palliative concessions. However, he triumphantly observed that they had long shared the anarchist belief in the impossibility of state administration of industries: "what chiefly interested most of them was matters of constructive realisation", he discovered, and was only too happy to show them the way[4].

1. Peter Kropotkin, Memoirs of a Revolutionist (N.Y., 1971), p. 488.
2. Ibid., p. 492.
3. Ibid., p. 493.
4. Ibid., p. 494.

Apart from the revolutionary potential detected in the masses, the encouraging note on which Freedom was welcomed in radical and socialist circles must have provided an additional reason for optimism among the anarchist vanguard. Although the main burden of producing the paper fell on the shoulders of Charlotte Wilson, who acted as editor, and Kropotkin, who contributed at least one article to each issue, Freedom was helped from the outset by anarchists and non-anarchists alike. William Morris offered the use of the offices of The Commonweal - the organ of the S.L. of which he was editor - and the Freethought Publishing Company, which belonged to Charles Bradlaugh and Annie Besant, offered a room and printing facilities for a very low rent. Social democrats like John Burns, Bernard Shaw, Havelock Ellis and Sidney Olivier contributed articles or money to the paper alongside foreign anarchists such as Kropotkin, Merlino, E. Roeller, Henry Glasse, Dyer Lum and native anarchists such as Charles Morton, Burns-Gibson, Tom Pearson and Charlotte Wilson.

In addition to its literary activity, the Freedom Group lectured and led discussions on anarchist standpoints when an opportunity presented itself. Yet as a small cadre its impact was limited. It could sow only sporadic seeds. The major breakthrough came about a year after Freedom first appeared. The catalyst which turned the isolated activities of the Freedom Group and other anarchists in the country into an integral component of a wider campaign to preach the gospel of anarchism was a sequence of events which took place far from England.

On 4 May 1886 a bomb was thrown in Chicago during a demonstration against industrial conditions at the McCormick Harvester Machine Company. The explosion and the brutal police response led to several deaths. The demonstration was part of the wider campaign for an eight-hour working day. In contrast to the situation in Britain, this campaign was led in Chicago and other American cities by anarchists. Consequently, eight leaders of the Chicago anarchists were arrested and charged with murder. The imposition of death sentences on seven of them - which were later commuted for

three of them - led to the affair becoming a world-wide issue, taken up by socialists and other radicals. Within these circles there were both misgivings about the proceedings at the trial - which itself was seen as a further attempt to curb freedom of speech - and widespread support for the eight-hour movement. During the period following the confirmation of the judgements by the Supreme Court (14 September 1887), meetings and other forms of protest activities were organised demanding the remission of the sentence. But all such activities were to no avail. On the appointed day, 11 November 1887, the executions took place in Chicago.

Certain socialist groups commemorated the anniversary for a few years but it was the anarchists who fervently and persistently fastened on to it as a token of anarchist solidarity, and made it into a lasting symbol of their quest for freedom and justice. For them, the whole affair bore testimony to the authorities' determination to crush anarchism and thus furnished the movement with its own heroes and martyrs.

More significant, however, was the affair's immediate effect on the strength and spread of British anarchism. The image of anarchists as targets for oppression enhanced commitment to, and sympathy for, the cause. That Albert Parsons, one of the executed anarchists, had handed himself over to the police inspired pride. Their deaths inspired "fresh indignation against wrong, fresh devotion to freedom"[1]. As a result, the movement enjoyed a burst of activity. Whereas previously the anarchists had often been forced to join the outdoor propaganda efforts of other groups, now, being the focus of an international drama, they were in a better position to initiate their own meetings. In addition, the case was a coalescing experience for the anarchists scattered around the country; the bond between them was henceforth to assume a more concrete form.

The Freedom Group now steadily absorbed new converts and became the centre of diverse and arduous work. In

1. Freedom, Dec. 1887.

February 1888, the group started monthly discussion groups in the S.L. hall in Farringdon Street, London, where Kropotkin, Wilson, Merlino and others preached anarchism to crowds of between 50 and 200 of all shades of socialist and anarchist opinion. Enthusiastically, anarchists prepared for the visit of Lucy Parsons, wife of Albert Parsons. The Chicago Commemoration Committee - set up jointly by the Freedom Group with the S.L. - whose anarchist element was steadily growing stronger - was responsible for the organisation of her visit. She arrived in Britain in November 1888 and lectured in London, Norwich, Ipswich and Edinburgh. Her visit provided an occasion for an anarchist conference in London, attended by the new communist-anarchist groups which had sprung into existence in the capital. Kropotkin's lecture tours in England and Scotland in 1889-90 were to enhance sympathy in the provinces.

In August 1889, Freedom announced that the "rapid growth of conscious Anarchist opinion makes it a matter of interest to a large number of comrades to know where and when meetings for and against Anarchism are to be held", and in the same issue a regular propaganda column was started which was to provide detailed information about future meetings and their proceedings. A letter from Manchester announced the existence of anarchist propaganda there. In September it was reported that the Freedom Group had made arrangements for open-air meetings to be held in Victoria Park, London, every Sunday afternoon. Anarchist speakers also met in coffee houses for friendly discussions with social democrats, and lectured in the clubs of other groups. By December 1889, anarchist activities were so widespread that the reporting of anarchist lectures and Chicago anniversary meetings filled two large columns in Freedom. These activities took place in St. Pancras and South and East London, and outside London in Huddersfield, Brighton, Aberdeen, Manchester and Yarmouth.

Arising from this expansion and from the labour unrest in the country, a need was felt for more anarchist literature which was still scarce in English. The East London

communist-anarchist group, formed by H. Davis of the S.L. in the wake of the successful propaganda campaign in Victoria Park, partly fulfilled this need in 1890 by publishing and distributing free copies of The Anarchist Labour Leaf.

During 1888 Freedom was obliged to change its address several times. In February - due to Bradlaugh's fear of contamination by the revolutionary image of anarchism and the need of The Link (published by Besant) for another room - Freedom had to move from the office of the Freethought Publishing Company to the office of The Socialist, run by Thomas Bolas. From July - when Bolas's paper was wound up - Freedom was printed and published by Thomas Binning at the Labour Union Printery. But apart from a short interruption in January and February 1889 - during which Charlotte Wilson had to leave London temporarily to be replaced until her return by James Blackwell, a former member of the marxist SDF and manager of its organ Justice - the paper continued to thrive. In the summer of 1889 Freedom's members bought their own type and added a single sheet supplement to the paper. In January 1891, Freedom moved to the New Fellowship Press in Newington Green where it had its own office under the management of the Jewish anarchist William Wess. A month later, Blackwell resigned and Wilson, who by then had returned, continued as sole editor.

Meanwhile, impelled by the same factors which boosted anarchist activity generally in the country, a distinct anarchist position was slowly but perceptibly crystallising within the larger anti-parliamentarian camp of the S.L. It won over more and more sympathisers, and increasingly set the tone and the moves of the faction of which it formed a part. The anarchists also bore a large measure of responsibility for the steadfast and uncompromising battle against the parliamentarian elements in the League - a battle which was won with their final withdrawal in the summer of 1888[1].

1. **For details see ch. 3. pp. 171-76.**

With the league effectively under exclusive anti-parliamentarian control, the anarchists could manoeuvre the official policies in their direction with fewer obstacles.

The Jewish anarchist element was also undergoing a period of consolidation in the second half of the 1880s. This process was marked by a sharpening of the ideological division between anarchism and social democracy, culminating in an organisational separation. In the meantime, the two tendencies jointly promoted socialism in the Jewish community.

During the 1880s Jewish anarchists and social democrats co-operated in running the Berner Street Club, producing the Arbeter Fraint and organising industrial protest. The club provided a popular assembly place for new immigrants and in many instances the only source of warmth and stimulation in their life. It offered lectures on cultural subjects, language classes, social evenings and most important of all, socialist education. From June 1886 it also housed the Arbeter Fraint. This paper, which in July 1886 became a weekly, developed various socialist themes and wrote about the issues closest to the immigrants' hearts - all in Yiddish, the familiar tongue. Under the editorship of Philip Kranz, a social democrat, a policy of non-partisanship was announced[1]. His right-hand man was the anarchist Jaffe. The Arbeter Fraint was read by eager Jewish workers in London, Leeds, Glasgow and Liverpool - as well as in Paris and New York - precipitating the formation of Jewish socialist groups and trade unions in London and the provinces.

The uncompromising atheistic tone of the written and oral propaganda produced by the cluster of individuals involved in these enterprises (the fiery orator Benjamin Feigenbaum (1860-1932) was a clarion voice) alienated many from anarchism. Despite this and the attempts of the Jewish establishment to undermine anarchist activities, more and more people joined the club and read the paper. A printing

1. Abraham Frumkin, In the Springtime of Jewish Socialism (N.Y., 1940). p. 36.

machine and press were purchased and pamphlets issued. In 1889 Konstantin Gallop (1862-92), a Russian social revolutionary, took over the editorship.

At the turn of the decade, members of the Arbeter Fraint Group - socialists and anarchists alike - played an important role in initiating Jewish labour agitation in London, providing guidance and leadership in strikes. Their biggest success at the time was the tailors' strike in 1889 which started when cap makers, joined by a group of 200 men from a firm of Government contractors and workers in associated shops in the East End, stopped work[1]. Subsequently, more than 6,000 people went on strike. The scope was wide, spirits high and outside support substantial. Finally, the employers gave in. The presence of the Arbeter Fraint Group was also conspicuous in the boot trade strike in the winter of 1890 and in other labour activities. The Arbeter Fraint itself was now "recognised by all Jewish unions as their official organ"[2].

Yet throughout this time the anarchist and social democratic streams drew further and further apart, the anarchists becoming the ever more dominant partner both within the Arbeter Fraint Group and in the club. As was the case for other anarchists, they were invigorated by the inspiring example of the Chicago martyrs. In 1888 an exclusive anarchist group - The Knights of Labour- was formed in London. It took part in the publication of the Arbeter Fraint and in the maintenance of the club and also engaged in publishing pamphlets in which anarchism and only anarchism was advocated[3].

In 1889 Jaffe joined the drift of Jewish youth to America, leaving anarchism unrepresented on the Arbeter Fraint's editorial board. To remedy this situation, the anarchists invited S. Yanovsky (1864-1939) to come over from America and take Jaffe's place. His arrival signalled the sharpening of the differences with the social democrats

1. Fishman, p. 169.
2. Ibid., p. 182.
3. It published works by Malatesta, Most, Feigenbaum and even printed an anarchist Haggada (The order of service for the Jewish festival of passover).

and the lapsing of the policy of non-partisanship. Subsequently, the club and the paper were made into an arena for the views of the rival factions - not always expressed in the most courteous fashion. That the anarchists might take full control of the Arbeter Fraint was signalled when in February 1891 Yanovsky was entrusted with the editorship. Their hegemony was confirmed two months later when the social democrats were outvoted 23 to 21 at a decisive meeting which determined the control over the paper[1]. This was followed by the departure of the social democrats. The Arbeter Fraint became a fully-fledged anarchist paper. It emphasised the anti-parliamentarian and uncompromising tactics of anarchism and expounded the communist-anarchist variety[2].

At the same time that these events were unfolding, Henry Seymour - the most dogged and active British individualist-anarchist in the period under discussion - laboured almost single-handedly to spread his version of anarchism. He lectured to radical and socialist meetings and was behind most of the individualist-anarchist publications that were printed in the 1880s. The individualist-anarchist position was further elaborated.

Non-invasive relationships between free individuals was accepted by all individual-anarchists as the condition and limitation of liberty. Most of them added that equality was just as much a condition though it should not be imposed[3]. However, they explained that their equality was not the same as that of the communist-anarchists[4]. For the individualist-anarchists equality meant equal rights and the abolition of monopolies[5]. In a society rid of monopolies, it was assumed, liberty would also bear the sense of "securing to the laborer the product he has

1. Ibid., p. 200.
2. Arbeter Fraint, 22/29 May; 26 June 1891.
3. Henry Seymour, The Philosophy of Anarchism. An address delivered before the London Dialectical Society. October 20 1887 (London, 1888), p. 2. See also John Badcock, Slaves to Duty (London, 1894), pp. 12-13.
4. Seymour, The Philosophy of Anarchism, p. 3.
5. Henry Seymour, Anarchy: Theory and Practice (London, 1888), p.5.

produced"[1]. They further argued that through the operation of a totally free and unregulated market economy profits would disappear and private possession would no longer be the capitalist accumulation of the products of other people's labour; in fact, it would not be property at all but the expression of individual freedom[2].

The communist-anarchists, on the other hand, the individualist-anarchists maintained, preordained equality for future society and therefore neglected the voluntarist libertarian principle[3]. Communist equality was also rejected on the grounds that the needs of all - idle and weak - would be satisfied, which for the individualist-anarchists meant not only robbing "labour of its rights", but also propping up exploitation by those who lived at the expense of the more productive elements in society[4]. The individualist-anarchists were in no doubt that by disregarding the producers' deeds and denying them the right to their products, the communist-anarchists advocated a gross injustice[5].

Although Seymour tried to win ideological and financial support, he was mostly unsuccessful in his endeavour. Only a few individuals - notably James Harragan and Lothrop Withington - intermittently lent him help[6]. Seymour also made repeated efforts to associate with anarchists of revolutionary persuasion - indigenous as well as foreign. In addition to facilitating an extensive publication of revolutionary literature, he participated and spoke at several protest meetings over the Chicago trial and organised a commemoration of the Paris Commune in 1887. Yet the ill-feeling that developed between him and Charlotte Wilson in the pioneering days of collaboration, and his attacks on

1. Seymour, The Philosophy of Anarchism, p. 3.
2. The Anarchist, 22 Jan. 1886.
3. Ibid., May 1887.
4. Ibid.
5. Seymour, The Philosophy of Anarchism, p. 3.
6. Withington was an American anarchist whose frequent visits to London from the early '80s enabled him to contribute to propaganda effort there both in writing and by word of mouth. The Democratic Review which he published in 1882 gave early vent to his anarchist sentiments. His activities in the London movement continued until his death in the Titanic in 1912.

Kropotkin's anarchist position[1], were not conducive to a good relationship with the Freedom Group. In the latter part of 1886 he also fell out with the S.L. over his staunch defence of Charles Theodore Reuss (a German member of the S.L.) against the League's official accusation that he was a German police spy (an accusation that in the event proved correct)[2]. Seymour's counter-accusation against Victor Dave[3] - the leader of Most's German faction in London - also alienated Most's followers among the foreign anarchist community.

Perhaps partly as a result of these strained relationships, Seymour encountered continuous difficulties in producing The Anarchist. Searching for new ways of making the paper more appealing, he changed its format and proposed to run a series of out-of-print anarchist works[4]. He also increased the price from 1d to 2d. These changes held the paper above water for just a little longer. In April 1888, he suspended publication for three months, and in August was forced to stop publication altogether. He did not give up however. In the last issue he had promised to return to the scene, and this he did in January 1889 albeit under a different title. The Revolutionary Review which he then launched continued in existence until September of that year.

Despite the title of the new paper, a tendency away from militancy and towards a less abrasive form of anarchism was discernible. In the first issues (prior to his personal rent campaign which temporarily inflamed him) he took a softened tone. The paper still recommended the reading of revolutionary literature, but gave it less forceful coverage. His other revolutionary preoccupations also subsided. No longer did he report as extensively on the condition of labour and revolutionary movements in England and elsewhere as previously[5], nor did he participate in revolutionary commemorations.

1. The Anarchist, May 1887.
2. Carlson, pp. 350-72.
3. The Anarchist, Oct. 1886.
4. Ibid., March 1887.
5. See for instance ibid., Dec. 1885.

Seymour's new mood better suited the general approach of the growing number of people who began to express interest in individual-anarchism, and in time would actually be more typical of the individualist-anarchism that was to consolidate in Britain. Indeed, whereas Seymour's early collaborators were firebrands who initially saw themselves as revolutionary fighters and spokesmen of the forces of labour[1], the new recruits - people like John Armsden, J. Greevz Fisher, John Badcock and Robert Harding - were conspicuous for their lack of revolutionary fervour.

Around the close of the decade, some of these new adherents nevertheless, on occasion, established working relationships with the communist-anarchists who had a more revolutionary inclination. This tendency coincided with the latter's underlying wish for a greater degree of anarchist unity in the face of the swelling anarchist ranks on the one hand and the growing isolation of the anarchists from the socialists and radical reformers on the other. Actually the S.L. showed little interest in the individualist-anarchists. It was the Freedom Group, for which anarchism was a general name for "a political theory compatible with diverse economical opinions", which regarded the individualist-anarchists as members of the same family, though economically immature for their failure to learn from the 30 years' experience of the labour movement[2]. The Freedom Group hoped that in time the mutualists (that is, the individualist-anarchists of Seymour's type who espoused Proudhon's ideas) would come to agree with the communist-anarchists. In the meantime, Freedom asserted: "Economic differences ... do not prevent political unity ... The bond of union between Anarchists is their common belief in individual freedom of self-guidance, voluntary association, general action by the direct and unanimous decision of the persons concerned"[3].

1. Already in The Democratic Review Withington introduced himself as a worker intent upon discussing the specific wrongs of the wage-slaves in an aggressive manner (April 1882). See also his speech at the Chicago meeting of 7 Oct. 1887 entitled "Constructive Murder" (The Anarchist, July 1888) and his articles and poems in the same publication.
2. Freedom, Feb. 1888.
3. Ibid., Nov. 1890.

A number of individualist-anarchists responded favourably to the invitation from the Freedom Group to take part in its discussion groups. On 30 March 1890, the German Autonomie Club opened its doors to both communist and individualist "to discuss the best means of propagating Anarchist principles, to thrash out the differences among Anarchists as well as to deal with the Social question from the Anarchist standpoint"[1]. The individualist-anarchist Albert Tarn, who had been speaking to communist-anarchist groups in the provinces and had written to Freedom, was the first lecturer. Robert Harding, another individualist-anarchist, participated in the wider anarchist conference on 24 June 1890.

All these developments in Jewish as well as gentile quarters boosted, and numerically reinforced, the national movement, however dispersed and loosely connected it was. The early 1890s were its halcyon days. In addition to the existing S.L. provincial groups - some of which had a strong anarchist element - new groups emerged in London and in Leicester, Walsall, Nottingham, Sheffield, Leeds, Liverpool, Hull, Newcastle and Dundee[2]. The contentment felt in the ranks was expressed in tones of increased self-assurance. The Chicago commemoration meetings of 1890 were viewed as the ultimate proof that "the seed has sunk into fertile soil and is germinating there"[3].

The upsurge of anarchist activity was characterised by a closing of the ranks among all the anarchist sections. Conferences and joint meetings of the native, Jewish and foreign anarchists of the communist, collectivist and individualist variety became commonplace. Yet the close co-operation with the individualist-anarchists was brief. If the new decade signalled the convergence of the communist-anarchist currents, it simultaneously marked the growing polarisation between them and the individualist-anarchists.

1. Ibid., Feb. 1890.
2. See propaganda column in The Commonweal, 26 Dec. 1891.
3. Freedom, Dec. 1890.

From the early '90s, individualist-anarchists would show themselves less and less in revolutionary circles, confining themselves to occasional polemical contributions to the communist-anarchist papers Freedom and Liberty[1] and to the odd protest on behalf of some revolutionary anarchists. Above all, this disposition by the individualist-anarchists to draw away from the communist-anarchists was a barometer of the changing tone within the communist-anarchist camp.

The general discontent among the labour force at the turn of the decade disposed socialists and non-socialists alike to believe that the revolution was dawning. With this conviction, the anarchists of the S.L. stepped up their agitation, stressing the need for more immediate, forceful and direct action that would radicalise the masses and intimidate the enemy forces into sharper confrontations with the underprivileged classes. The mood encapsulated in this shift conveyed the growing impatience within the League with the tactics of peaceful education as advocated in it by William Morris and his anti-parliamentarian followers who were now the only non-anarchists in the League. In October 1889 Morris was removed from the editorship of The Commonweal - the League's organ - and Frank Kitz took over. The latter was soon joined as co-editor by David Nicoll[2]. After a while Kitz was replaced by Charles Mowbray.

Under the anarchists' sole control, the paper threw open its pages to intransigent opinion. The departure of the moderate anti-parliamentarian elements[3] and subsequent decline in membership were offset by a greater sense of coherence and purpose, enhanced by the crowds of thousands drawn by the League's outdoor meetings during 1890 and 1891. In addition, The Commonweal, which had turned into a monthly in December 1890 upon Morris's departure from the League, again managed to appear weekly from May 1891. That summer the first anarchist provincial paper - The Anarchist - was started in Sheffield, printed and published by Dr. John

1. See below p. 56.
2. Nicoll (1860-1919) first emerged in the early days of the Socialist League as its librarian, propaganda secretary and a contributor of articles and poems to The Commonweal.
3. For details see ch. 3. pp. 176-79.

Creaghe[1]. The League's rent strike campaigns which attracted audiences of hundreds and provoked individual instances of rent refusal in the East End of London and in Sheffield, fed the ever-growing optimism and exhilaration.

In their enthusiasm some Leaguers were driven to protest in an increasingly aggressive fashion. Though disappointed at having failed to win enough active support for their campaigns but at the same time more fully convinced that revolution was around the corner, a few members urged violent acts as a way of intensifying the potential revolutionary situation in the country. Emotion-charged speeches and pleas for heroic postures became more common and the use of dynamite was recommended. Creaghe exclaimed:

> "Give me Anarchists willing to die NOW if necessary for Anarchy, and if you can find me 15 or 20 to join me I promise you we will make an oppression on the enemy, and do more to make recruits to our cause than all the rest who only preach and write verses ... We would have to fight though and per chance kill an occasional keeper or policeman"[2].

He also warned: "explosives ought to be employed and no doubt in the course of the present winter there will be opportunities enough".

The League was in the grip of euphoria when it was rudely awakened. On 8 January 1892 the newspapers came out with the stunning news that several anarchists in Walsall had been arrested for holding explosive substances. In the trial at the end of March they were accused of possessing explosives for an unlawful purpose for conspiring "to cause an explosion in the United Kingdom of a nature likely to endanger life or to cause serious injury to property ... or to enable other persons to do so"[3]. Three of them were sentenced to ten years imprisonment and penal servitude.

1. The paper ceased publication after a few issues. Creaghe was an Irishman by birth who in the early '90s worked as a doctor in a poor locality of Sheffield, where he "often returned his fees to impoverished patients, telling them to buy food". (Freedom, June 1934). From Sheffield he would move to Liverpool, London and then to Spain, and thence to Argentina where he would organise vigorous anarcho-syndicalist propaganda. With the outbreak of the Mexican revolution he went to preach the cause there.

2. The Commonweal, 28 Nov. 1891.

3. The Times, 30 March 1892.

Together with other anarchist organs, the few issues of The Walsall Anarchist, published by George Cores from 27 February 1892, alleged deep police complicity in the case. On 6 May David Nicoll, the editor of The Commonweal, was sentenced to eighteen months imprisonment with hard labour for incitement to murder[1]. John Turner[2], R.W. Burnie[3] and Cores "stepped gallantly to the front" to keep The Commonweal going[4]. H.B. Samuels took over the editorship on 14 May.

Only after a while were the damaging consequences of aggressive language fully brought home to the League. Immediately after the Walsall affair and the arrest of Nicoll, the stark reality of dawning isolation was still obscured by the sympathy of some radicals and social democrats[5]. The prompt resumption of the publication of The Commonweal and the popularity it enjoyed for a short time gave cause for complacency. Yet the aftermath left little room for optimism. The strong suspicions that the Walsall affair was instigated by an agent provocateur poisoned the atmosphere in the League[6]. Growing public hostility, lack of finance and the moving away of a few active members from anarchist centres, scattered and diminished the League's forces. Though out-door meetings still attracted large crowds, subscriptions to The Commonweal dropped off and the paper suspended publication from 4 September 1892 to 1 May 1893.

1. For further details about the Walsall affair and Nicoll's trial see ch. 6 pp.333-44. Nicoll's prison term was a traumatic experience from which he never fully recovered. He wrote about this experience in his pamphlets Justice in England and Life in English Prisons. The fact that he was never restored to the editorship of The Commonweal after he left prison, further affected his mental condition. For a while a resorted to solitary though prolific literary pursuits, but soon he "was unable to work and met comrades with a cracked laugh, a smile that horrified, and a mysterious manner. His talk was always about spies". (Guy A. Aldred, Dogmas Discarded (Glasgow, 1940), pt. 2. p. 68.)
2. Turner was born (1864) into a Quaker and Liberal family. He joined the S.L. upon the split from the SDF (letter to Nettlau, 1 May 1930, [N. C.]), and was to be one of anarchism's most prominent union activists.
3. Burnie had previously in 1891 edited The Commonweal for a few months.
4. Freedom, Oct. - Nov. 1892.
5. See reports on Mowbray's wife's funeral (The Commonweal, 30 April 1892) and on the receipt of letters of support (ibid., 7 May 1892).
6. For details see ch. 6. pp. 340-44.

Petty quarrels dissipated much of the remaining energy. On 15 February 1894, three days after the French anarchist Emil Henry had thrown a bomb into the Café Véry in Paris, a bomb exploded in Greenwich Park in London killing Bourdin, the person holding it. A French anarchist, he was suspected of actually planning to blow up the Observatory, although his movements and real intentions were never revealed. The public was alarmed, and more and more sympathisers kept themselves away from any contact with anarchists. Most of the League's groups gradually disbanded. Shortage of money became acute with the passing months. On 29 June Thomas Cantwell[1], the compositor of The Commonweal, and Carl Quinn[2], another active member , were arrested and a month later sentenced to six months hard labour for seditious language and incitement to murder. The arrests were followed by the seizure of The Commonweal's office by the police who only vacated the premises a month later. Under such circumstances The Commonweal succumbed and ceased publication. The last number appeared on 12 May 1894[3].

Throughout this hectic period Freedom also passed through trying times. By 1892, it had moved its offices three times in two years. Wilson had to resign again for personal reasons and the editorship was temporarily taken over by N.F. Dryhurst who had been sub-editing the propaganda column for some time. Although an impressive gallery of British and non-British anarchist writers contributed their literary talents to the paper, no permanent editor was found. In addition, the paper was suffering acutely from shortage of funds. Tainted with the anarchist image, though not employing violent language, the Freedom Group's situation became all the more difficult. It badly needed a transfusion of new blood.

1. Cantwell (1864-1906) was a veteran member of the S.L. who, after the League's collapse became Freedom's printer. In 1902 his health broke down, and after four months in an infirmary he opened a store in Fulham Road. For a biographical sketch see Freedom, Jan. 1907.
2.. For Quinn's subsequent career see below pp. 64-68.
3. The Commonweal was single-handedly revived by Nicoll with sporadic issues appearing in Sheffield and then in London in 1896-98 and a few later until 1907.

The merger with the residual S.L. at the beginning of 1895 was thus timely and highly welcome. The few remaining Leaguers brought with them tenacity, manpower and printing facilities. Some of them, such as John Turner and Joseph Presburg[1], had in any case been active in both bodies and the rest were acquainted with the members and the type of work carried out by the Freedom Group. The League, for its part, was drained of physical and mental resources and no longer had any reason to continue as a separate entity. The integration of the active London forces was speedy and smooth. At first, Freedom was suspended for four months, and when it resumed publication in May 1895, it did so under an editorial committee of four - W. Wess, Alfred Marsh[2], Turner and Cantwell. This arrangement did not work out well, however, and in February 1896 Marsh was entrusted with the sole editorship.

With the union between the two groups, the flirtation of British anarchism with the mood of violence was over. However brief, it cost the anarchist movement the momentum it had slowly acquired up to the early '90s which it would never completely regain.

The London Jewish anarchists, too, were to suffer from internal difficulties in an increasingly hostile environment as the '90s progressed. The split following the departure of the social democrats immediately resulted in a sharp drop in attendance at the Berner Street Club and in the number of Arbeter Fraint agitators. Yanovsky was left to issue the paper with the assistance of two anarchists whose poor literary ability forced him to fill the paper himself, which he did under different pseudonyms. Though he managed briefly to increase the sales of the paper,

1. Presburg (J. Perry) was soon to lead the public campaign against the torture of imprisoned anarchists in Spain.
2. Marsh (1850-1914) was the son of a brush manufacturer who, a convinced freethinker, later in life married the daughter of the famous freethinker Holyoake. Marsh himself was a violinist, maintaining himself by giving music lessons and playing in a theatre orchestra. His occupation enabled him to dedicate one day a week to the publication of Freedom. However, it prevented him from attending the evening meetings, as a result of which he was little known personally in the movement. (Nettlau's unpublished MS. (German), p. 115 [N.C.]).

boost the devotion of the group around it and consolidate its anarchist position[1], the financial state of the paper was so shaky that publication was suspended between 22 January and 8 April 1892. In November the anarchists were forced to forsake their Berner Street Club and meet in the back room of the Sugar Loaf pub, where drunks used foul language and abused them[2]. The Arbeter Fraint was printed at various premises. Then the anarchists watched their ranks split open by contradictory approaches towards the use of violence, and in 1894, as a result suffered the withdrawal of their volatile editor Yanovsky who had stood out against terrorist tactics. Soon afterwards he returned to America.

The paper, then edited by I. Kaplan, ceased publication from July 1894 to April 1895. William Wess subsequently took over its production, but with the arrival of Abraham Frumkin (1872-1940) from Turkey in 1896 returned with some relief to English anarchist propaganda work[3]. The paper's difficulties remained, and after a shaky period in 1896-97 it stopped appearing as of March 1897. In its stead Frumkin started another paper, The Propagandist. However, that, too, struggled, surviving only until its eleventh issue. The Arbeter Fraint Group continued its agitation and literary production, but at a low level.

During the 1880s Seymour laid the groundwork for wider individualist-anarchist propaganda in the 1890s. Its focus in the first half of the latter decade was economic reform. The individualist-anarchists believed that the root of poverty and inequality lay in the land monopoly in the non-industrialised countries, and in the money monopoly in the industrialised societies. Thus, they concentrated in particular on the advocacy of free currency. "If the supply of money were free", Seymour argued against Marx,

1. Yanovsky also published a Yiddish pamphlet called What The Anarchists Want which espoused a communist-anarchist position.
2. Rocker, The London Years, pp. 81-82.
3. Frumkin, p. 76.

"then surplus value would vanish"[1]. The worker would be on an equal footing with any producer, able to use his ability and energy to the full and bargain in the context of equal conditions and real free competition.

The people who now joined Seymour in voicing these views were like him equipped with literary ability and some financial means. As a result these years saw the production of a wealth of individualist-anarchist literature and the initiation of various enterprises which instructed the public in the advantages of administering a mutualist economy. The Free Currency Propaganda, which was established with headquarters at the South Place Institute, included some of the most prolific champions of individualist-anarchism. The secretary was Henry Seymour and the treasurer John Badcock[2]. Other members were John Armsden[3] and G.O. Warren[4]. The members gave public lectures and published the Free Propaganda Leaflets and the Free Propaganda Tracts, with the aim of finally putting the propaganda into practice through the creation of mutualist banks. In 1892 the Free Exchange was launched with Seymour as editor[5].

Other individualist-anarchists were as dynamic. Albert Tarn published The Herald of Revolt from October 1890 to February 1892, and then came out with Free Trade[6]. In 1891 he set up the Citizen's Defence League whose object was "to bring into association all those who are prepared to repudiate the state and assert their right of individual judgement in all matters: further to resent and resist any

1. Henry Seymour, The Fallacy of Marx's Theory of Surplus-Value (London, 1897), p. 58.
2. In his pamphlets and lectures, Babcock argued in particular against intervention in the life of the individual as expressed by taxes, education, the marriage laws and prejudice of any kind. See When Love is Liberty and Nature Law (London, 1893) and Slaves to Duty (London, 1894).
3. In Value (London, 1892) and Trade Depressions (London, 1892), Armsden expounded the alternatives to the current means of exchange. See Liberty Sept. 1894 for his article "Why I am an Individualist Anarchist". See also ch. 4. p. 250, n.3.
4. Warren was a British aristocrat who spent most of his life in America. During a short break in England in the early '90s he contributed to individualist-anarchist propaganda there and to the communist-anarchist papers Freedom and Liberty. One of his lectures entitled Freedom was published in 1893.
5. Three editions of Free Exchange appeared.
6. Free Trade ceased publication after eight issues.

misconduct on the part of the authorities and their employers"[1]. He was also the secretary of the Free Trade Extension League. Together with J. Greevz Fisher he made the government monopoly over the post office a favourite target for abuse[2].

Even though the English individualist-anarchists derived much of their theoretical standpoint from the U.S.A., the Stirnerite streak that flowed through much of American individualist-anarchism found little reflection on the other side of the Atlantic. Henry John Mackay, a millionaire German poet and a descendant of a Scottish family, had propounded Stirner's philosophy in Britain in the late '80s when he was researching his novel The Anarchists in London. The novel, published in English in 1891, presented a fictional compendium of Stirner's view of life, expressed by the central figure - Auban[3]. The social background was that of the authentic anarchist milieu in London at that time.

Some individualist-anarchists like John Badcock, John Armsden, Albert Tarn and William Gilmour evinced an egoist bias within the framework of their mutualist economics, much of which they acquired through Tucker who was himself inspired by Stirner's ideas and who kept in close touch with his British counterparts. The philosophy of Max Stirner was discovered in a more direct way as the impact of Nietzsche began to be felt towards the end of the century. Around this time The Truthseeker edited by the freethinker John William Gott[4] and published in Bradford also manifested some of this influence among all shades of anarchist opinion. During the same period, the American individualist-anarchist John Basil Barnhill published The Eagle and the Serpent in London[5]. This paper specifically

1. Albert Tarn, The Individual and the State (London, 1891 on the back of p. 1.) Two years earlier Tarn published another individualist-anarchist pamphlet The State: its origin; its nature and its abolition.
2. Among Fisher's writings are Illegitimate Children (London, 1893); Voluntary Taxation (London, 1894) and Postal Reform (London, 1894).
3. John Henry Mackay, The Anarchists (Boston, 1891).
4. For a sketch of him see T.A. Jackson, Solo Trumpet (London, 1953), p. 91.
5. Originally it was published in Chicago.

promoted the views of Stirner, Nietzsche and Ibsen. Stirner's and Nietzsche's writings also found some echo among the British individualists. Otherwise, Stirner created few ripples. For the individualist-anarchists in Britain the economic system was apparently the main preoccupation, and mutual co-operation the best guarantee of a free social order.

Concern over individual liberty in private matters was repeatedly expressed by individualist-anarchists[1]. But in contrast to their American counterparts, the British individualist-anarchists never devoted much of their energy to campaigning on such subjects. However, with the formation of the Legitimation League in 1893 some individualist-anarchists became more absorbed with these issues.

The League's objective was to secure rights of inheritance for illegitimate children.[2] Partly contingent on legal change, this was not an anarchist goal as such . But the polemics that this issue sparked off about legal marriage and the state's functions in general attracted the attention of some individualist-anarchists. Greevz Fisher became the vice-president of the League (1895-98), John Badcock the correspondence secretary for London and Seymour, although not a member, attended its meetings.

The anarchists were not necessarily the most unorthodox of those involved in the debates, nor did they invariably share common points of view. What united them and constituted a common ground for collaboration with other members was the promotion of personal liberties against the encroachment of the state and its laws. This common concern also brought avowed individualists into the League. Wordsworth Donisthorpe was the president of the League (1894-98) and Auberon Herbert a close observer, both of them leading individualists. (Herbert also defined his creed as voluntarism). The individualist-anarchists thus shared a platform with their regular sparring partners. (The

1. See for instance Henry Seymour, The Anarchy of Love (London, 1888).
2. For the biennial proceedings of the League see Oswald Dawson, ed., The Bar Sinister and Licit Love (London, 1895).

other polemical partners of the individualist-anarchists were the communist-anarchists).

The ideological similarities between British individualism as represented by Donisthorpe, Herbert, the Liberty and Property Defence League and the Personal Rights Association, and individualist-anarchism had been indicated by their respective critics. Indeed, apart from their common aim of defending the individual against the growth of state power and the advance of both collectivism and monopolistic capitalism, they shared a deep mistrust of large organisations, parliamentarianism and the law. Both proposed to dispense with government control and peacefully and gradually inaugurate a society ruled by untrammelled competition and voluntary association. The affinity between the two - which encompassed their American counterparts - was manifested in the scope given in their respective publications to the views of the other side, even if often through its refutation.

But the gulf existing between individualism and individualist-anarchism in other fundamental respects was unbridgeable. The primary concern of the individualists with the preservation of existing property relations was incompatible with the individualist-anarchist objective of sweeping changes in the structure of these relations and indeed in society as a whole. Whereas the individualist-anarchists meant to abolish monopoly and create equal opportunities so as to rectify capitalist injustice and emancipate the workers, the individualists assailed no privilege, and in essence sought to defend the vested interests of the employers. Furthermore, in order to safeguard property, the individualists were willing to tolerate a vestigial government, a proposition that was anathema to all anarchists[1]. The implications of such differences prevented any alliance between the two.

As the decade wore on, the Legitimation League veered towards the free love position. Its paper The Adult - first published in June 1897 - bore the sub-title "a

1. For an exposition of the differences see the polemic between Tarn and Herbert in Herbert's journal The Free Life 15 Aug. 1890.

journal of sex" and declared its intention to serve as a platform for "tabooed topics"[1]. Feeling the League to be too radical for their task, some of its officials resigned in January 1898. Among them were Wordsworth Donisthorpe and J. Greevz Fisher. Concurrently, the very same drift persuaded anarchists of a firmer radical stamp to take an interest in the League. Lilian Harman, the American individualist-anarchist and pioneer of sexual reform, became the new president. In fact, The Adult was modelled on her Chicago paper Lucifer. The Tolstoyan, Morrison Davidson, also expressed an interest. The paper itself often referred to the subject of anarchism and to anarchist writings. When the editor, George Bedborough, was arrested in mid-1898 for selling and publishing obscene literature, Seymour organised the Free Press Defence Committee of which John Turner and Edward Carpenter, a dedicated campaigner for sexual tolerance, were members[2]. Seymour, once a believer in free love but now its opponent[3], took the editorship upon himself in July 1898 as a champion of free thought.

By pleading guilty, Bedborough effectively signed the League's death warrant. The League's fate in turn signalled the fate of British individualist-anarchism, as the faltering existence of individualist-anarchism in the latter part of the 1890s had been sustained by the League. Seymour was the last standard-bearer, carrying on with The Adult until March 1899. In the last issue, however, he admitted that he had long ago stopped calling himself an anarchist or opposing a government unless it was tyrannical. He then disappeared from the stage of British anarchism. Almost all of his fellow individualist-anarchists had long since removed themselves from such occupations. With his departure the whole individualist-anarchist trend died out, leaving hardly any trace. The dissemination of Proudhon's theories would be carried on mainly in Christian-anarchist

1. The Adult, Oct. 1897.
2. For the institutional reaction to the League see ch. 6 pp. 338-39.
3. To judge from his contributions to The Adult, Seymour wanted to preserve marriage but without what for him was its objectionable features. That is to say he wanted to reform it - for instance by giving women economic independence - but not to abolish it.

circles.

For a short period in the mid-1890s, the thinning communist-anarchist ranks reacted to the worsening conditions in the movement by a minor renaissance of literary activity, in addition to pursuing the publication of Freedom and pamphlets associated with it. Short of active members to spread the word at public meetings, and encountering increasing difficulty in hiring halls and delivering speeches without obstruction, the movement was progressively forced to rely on the written word. The prerequisites for regular production of journals - a competent and resourceful team or at least a dynamic individual and financial backing - were still available at the time. The concurrent need to reinforce the constructive side of anarchism against its violent image only intensified the dedication of those involved in such undertakings.

The Torch was the product of the imaginative children of William Michael Rossetti[1]. Imbibing anarchist ideas from the radical and revolutionary guests in their republican and freethinking home[2], the two energetic sisters, Olivia and Helen - helped by their youthful brother and sister - felt an urge to share their new-found enthusiasm with others by starting the paper in 1891. Initially, The Torch circulated as a hand-written manuscript among their friends and at outdoor meetings[3]. With the closure of The Commonweal, the girls took upon themselves the publication of a printed version of The Torch which had been suspended for a while. The first issue of this communist-anarchist paper appeared on 15 June 1894. The contributors were local talents as well as some of the most famous literary anarchists such as Charles Malato, Augustin Hamon, Louise Michel, Emil Pouget,

1. Brother of the poetess Christina Rossetti and the painter Dante Gabriel Rossetti.
2. In her book Dante Gabriel Rossetti (London, 1949) Helen divulged that the painter Ford Madox Brown who "welcomed the Russian revolutionaries of different shades of opinion" including Kropotkin, encouraged their "youthful socialistic and anarchistic leanings" (p. 41.).
3. In a letter to Nettlau, Samuels admitted that the Rosettis were "growing in influence and power among people whom we could not reach in the ordinary way". (Letter dated 24 April 1893 [N.C.]).

Emma Goldman and Malatesta. It was probably through these wide connections that the paper was able to provide commentaries on events and labour conditions not only in England but also abroad.

At the outset, the paper was administered from the Rossettis' home, to the growing annoyance of their father who suspected that the house - which was frequented by local and foreign anarchists, especially Italians - was under Scotland Yard surveillance. The mother was disinclined "to chill" the "youngsters in their generous enthusiasms"[1]. However, after her death the girls were forced to move to 127 Ossulston Street N.W. at the end of 1894. The house they rented "became a sort of club where the hangers on of the extreme Left idled away an immense amount of time whilst their infant host and hostesses were extremely active over their formes"[2]. But at the beginning of 1896, to the relief of their family, the youngsters threw off "the excesses and fantasticalities of anarchism"[3]. Apparently this was largely due to the unpleasant milieu created around them which Olivia wrote about in 1903 in a fictional work called A Girl among the Anarchists, published under the pseudonym Isabel Meredith.

The defection of the Rossettis created a furore in circles associated with the venture. There were many claimants to the inheritance, especially those whose maintenance had depended on the girls[4]. Nettlau took advantage of the offer Olivia made to sell the type and plant, seeing in it a golden opportunity to move Freedom to a more spacious office in which publishing and meetings could both take place. He and Bernard Kempfmeyer, a German anarchist, contributed ten pounds each. The place was leased by them and the printing equipment, plus a more sophisticated machine, were purchased for the use of Freedom[5]. The Torch lingered

1. William Michael Rossetti, Some Reminiscences (London, 1906) Vol. 2., p. 452.
2. Ford Madox Ford, Return to Yesterday (London, 1931), p. 109.
3. Rossetti, Some Reminiscences, Vol. 2. p. 453.
4. For the different claimants and the ensuing confrontations see the correspondence in Nettlau Collection for 1896.
5. It was to be its home until 1928.

for a few more months, but without the Rossettis' money and patronage it perished.

James Tochatti was another activist with literary concerns[1]. A veteran ex-member of the S.L.'s Hammersmith branch which had just compromised with parliamentarianism - he watched with apprehension the turn his friends had taken and particularly then felt impelled to try and reverse the trend. A resourceful man, he bought a small set of type and press, acquired the know-how of printing and managed to collect some money in order to spread communist-anarchist views. Earning his living as a master tailor, he dedicated the rest of his time to the press which he had set up in the cellar of his shop and called La Carmagnole. From here he single-handedly mounted a wide-ranging literary campaign. In January 1894, he launched the monthly Liberty. As predicted by The Commonweal, the paper took a position somewhere between the revolutionary Commonweal and the philosophic Freedom[2]. Its idiosyncratic character was expressed in the printing of revolutionary poems and of diverse anarchist and socialist opinion.

Tochatti also published pamphlets galore among which were the series "Why I am" (first published in Liberty), written by anarchists and socialists of all creeds, and the series "Liberty Bookshelf" through which works by Kropotkin, Malatesta, Morris and Nicoll became known to the public. However, financial difficulties[3] and sickness forced Tochatti to announce the suspension of Liberty in December 1896. Despite his hopes the paper never saw print again. For a time, though, he continued to publish pamphlets.

On 26 July 1896 The Alarm, designed to comment on current events and expose social evils in the simplest and clearest way, was first printed. In effect it was the unofficial organ of the Associated Anarchists, a group which hoped to improve anarchist propaganda by introducing

1. Tochatti (died 1928) had a Scottish mother and may have been the son of an Italian count who had fled to Scotland after a duel. His mother had intended for him to be a priest, but he became a freethinker in his youth.
2. The Commonweal, 20 Jan. 1894.
3. Letter from Tochatti to Nettlau, 28 April 1895.[N.C.]

stricter procedure[1]. However, with the boycott of the paper by other comrades, the financial problems and, above all, the internal discord, the paper soon came to an end. The walk-out of the business manager and the secretary of the paper, carrying with them the type, the office accessories and probably the subscription lists as well, left the rest of the staff impotent. After ten issues (the last being on 22 November 1896), the paper ceased to appear[2].

1897-1906

The third phase of anarchism was characterised by decline, with membership, activity, and zest all receding. Internal and external factors conspired together to set anarchism on its downhill path. Internally, it was weakened by disillusionment, squabbling and failure to find new avenues for effective action. Externally, police intervention and employers' harassment, adverse public reaction and the exclusion of the anarchists from the Second International from the 1896 Congress onwards, combined to undermine the credibility of the anarchist movement. Under such unfavourable conditions, speaking on street corners and from public platforms became rarer. Moreover, there was no anarchist club to assume the role of a propaganda channel.

Only a small number of comrades came to the anarchist-communist conference on 26-27 December 1897. Some of the participants decided to organise themselves into the Western London Anarchist Group and to meet in the Communist Club in Charlotte Street. The only other practical move that resulted from the conference was that the Sunday afternoon lectures, which until then had only been occasional, became a regular event to be followed by informal discussions in a nearby café. They, in turn, inspired the institution of lecture evenings in a clubroom in The Enterprise in Long Acre, a pub run by the labour organiser Tom Mann. Elsewhere in London, there was very little activity.

Furthermore, the attempts to veritalise the provincial

1. For details about the Associated Anarchists see ch. 2. pp. 109-10.
2. Another paper which appeared at the same period was Nicoll's The Anarchist, published in Sheffield from March 1894 until Nicoll started to republish The Commonweal in mid 1896.

groups proved largely unsuccessful, except in Leeds and in Manchester where William MacQueen[1] and his brother-in-law Alf Barton respectively kept the anarchist banner aloft. In Manchester this was illustrated by the appearance of The Summary in November 1897 and by the publication of The Free Commune (in both Leeds and Manchester) for a few months in 1898 and 1899. This latter publication was inspired by the anarchist communal settlements in Essex and in the North[2]. Liverpool was another place where some anarchist presence was maintained. Otherwise there was an acute shortage of enthusiasm, money and manpower in the provinces.

Apart from the publications of David Nicoll and the short-lived provincial papers, from 1897 Freedom was the only paper to appear regularly which it continued to do for many years. The infrequency of outdoor and indoor meetings caused the paper to be more dependent on voluntary subscriptions, making its fate even more precarious. Privately, Marsh complained to Nettlau that Freedom "financially is in terribly low water, and writing round to the groups has produced no effect"[3].

All this was taking place against a general background of mounting impoverishment of revolutionary fervour. The years leading up to and following the Boer War (1899-1901) were notable for the prevailing spirit of jingoistic imperialism, staunch patriotism and the entrenchment of the employers' will in defending their authority. Very little could be done to stem this tide; the anarchists had neither the speakers nor the energy to take on this battle. Indeed, during the war the anarchist movement declined to its lowest point. A few anti-war demonstrations were organised, with MacQueen being the most outspoken in his opposition to the war and in his defence of the Boers' rights. Some anti-war propaganda was published, in which the readership was urged to protest against the war and to refuse to be conscripted on the grounds that the army was only

1. MacQueen (1875-1908) died of tuberculosis contracted in an American prison in which he was incarcerated under the anti-anarchist laws, which had been passed after the assassination of President McKinley in 1901.
2. For details about these communities see ch. 2. pp. 140-49.
3. Letter dated 23 November 1897. [N.C.]

helping the capitalists in their fight against the overwhelmingly outnumbered Boers[1]. But little besides the unexpectedly encouraging reception of Emma Goldman's outdoor meetings in London and in Scotland brightened the horizon[2]. Freedom itself admitted that her visit saved anarchist activities in 1899[3].

The tone of Freedom became increasingly desperate as the sense of reaction and helplessness continued to grow. In a circular sent out on 1 November 1900, Cantwell, the printer of the paper, called the attention of the readership to the fact that the paper was deeply in debt[4]. The appeal failed to win financial support and the number of contributors further decreased. Only a mere handful maintained membership of the Freedom Group itself. The hard-pressed editor, finding himself short of contributors, filled the paper mostly with international notes and reprints. After the departure of Mann to Australia, The Enterprise pub closed and the meetings stopped. Thus, except for the publication of Freedom, the anarchist movement had virtually come to a standstill.

The war came close to, but did not succeed in, delivering the coup de grâce to the native movement. However, the following years did not drastically improve the situation. Freedom was still in a bad way in 1904[5]. Harry Kelly, an American anarchist then living in England, lamented that the Freedom Group was the last mohican in London and that its rare meetings had an average attendance of only six, two of whom were Tolstoyans[6]. In the provinces, MacQueen and Barton were almost the last people still continuing to breathe life into the movement. Immediately following the height of the Boer War (summer 1900) they issued The Anarchist Newsletter in Leeds with a view to providing sorely needed "means of communication between the comrades in

1. See for instance Kropotkin's "The Worker and the War" a handbill published by Freedom.
2. Later Goldman, the American anarchist, recorded the state of mind of the comrades in England at that time, in Living My Life (N.Y., 1931) Vol. 1. p. 252.
3. Freedom, Jan-Feb. 1900.
4. The circular can be found in N.C.
5. Letter from Kropotkin to Jean Grave, 22 June 1904, in Nettlau's MS. p. 144.
6. Harry Kelly's MS. (1906). [N.C.].

England"[1]. Thereafter, MacQueen concentrated on the publication of the Free Commune Pamphlets and Anarchist Leaflets which contained classic anarchist arguments and texts by Charlotte Wilson, Kropotkin and Most among others. MacQueen's departure to America in the beginning of 1902 was eventually to put an end to these literary attempts too[2]. In a nostalgic mood, Marsh wrote to Nettlau in 1906: "it is sad to look at the gaps that the last few years have made in our ranks. And if you can, or I can, recall vividly the days, say, of the first meetings of the Freedom Group ... the feeling of loss is intensified"[3]. From the outside, W.C. Hart, a former anarchist, evinced a similar impression: "Today there are practically no purely English anarchists"[4].

The 1890s gave rise to a new emphasis in anarchism, strongly characterised by humanitarian and spiritual preoccupations. In the new formulation the focus shifted to man's psychological needs and mystical inclinations, greater importance being given to spiritual security over material well-being. The particular kind of estrangement from contemporary social conditions and values represented by this new mood was part of a larger intellectual opposition to the materialism, commercialism and respectability of the mid- and late-Victorian era, manifested at times by " a flight from reason" into theosophy, occultism and spiritualism, and at other times into "Vegetarianism, Anti-Vivisection, Women's Rights [and] Kindness to Animals"[5].

Such new tendencies within the anarchist movement were symptomatic of the general pull that ethical and religious or quasi-religious doctrines were exerting over the nascent labour movement. The Fellowship of the New Life from

1. The Anarchist Newsletter, 31 Aug. 1900.
2. Until 1903, The Free Commune Press, which published this literature, worked from Leeds, and thenceforth from Hull - a centre of German refugees. From 1904, the Press published its propaganda material in German.
3. Letter dated 26 March 1906. [N.C.]
4. W.C. Hart, Confessions of an Anarchist (London, 1906), p. 97.
5. James Webb, The Flight from Reason (London, 1971), p. 228. Volume 1 of The Age of the Irrational.

which the Fabian Society developed[1], The Labour Church[2] and the Humanitarian League[3] were some of the bodies that bore a distinct imprint of these influences. Much of the impetus of the ILP - the precursor of the Labour Party - derived from the same ethical and religious sources.

Notwithstanding the biting atheistic streak embedded in anarchism, this spirit penetrated the anarchist fraternity whose theoretical bedrock was imbued with a strong moralistic message and therefore blended with it well. However, the consolidation of these ethical and spiritual tendencies into a strong current in the anarchist movement precisely in the mid '90s, suggests that it was not simply a reflection of general developments in the labour movement and in some intellectual circles. The timing of the new direction and its emphasis on the moral as well as the pacific message of anarchism indicates that it was another manifestation of the movement's search for a more acceptable, less militant and cataclysmic brand of anarchism - that it was one of the movement's responses in the face of violent anarchist rhetoric and the subsequent slump in its appeal.

1. See ch. 3. pp. 162-63.
2. The Labour Church movement (est. 1891) was an attempt to create a church relevant to both the spiritual and material needs of working people. It stressed God's benevolent interference in the world and the importance of following him, as well as the necessity for social reform. John Trevor, the founder of the movement, was inspired in his search for a sound accommodation of the religious message with the pressing needs of the workers by an atheist anarchist (John Trevor, My Quest for God (Horsted Keynes, 1908), pp. 233-34). Indeed, his beliefs conveyed an undercurrent of anarchist sentiments in their emphasis on freedom and their anti-institutional slant.
3. The Humanitarian League protested "not only against the cruelties inflicted by men on men, in the name of law, authority, and conventional usage, but also, in accordance with the same sentiment of humanity, against the wanton ill-treatment of the lower animals". (The Labour Annual (1897), p. 108). The sources of inspiration of Henry Salt, the organiser and secretary of the League (1891-1920) are suggested by the authors whose works he edited and about whose lives and thoughts he wrote - Godwin, Shelley and the American anti-statist and advocate of the simple life, Henry Thoreau.

This idealistic current in anarchism did not constitute a coherent ideological body of thought. Rather it consisted of different clusters of ideas, linked by similar perceptions and world views and sources of inspiration and temperament. Fundamental to this current was a rejection of conventional scientific rationalism both as a method of explaining human and natural phenomena and as a means of attaining truth and understanding. Man's feelings, desires and mystical impulses were the matrix and the key to social change. This brand of anarchism hence signified a sharp turn inside the orbit of anarchism, towards introspection - towards a new awareness of the self as a source of insight into the meaning of experience and redemption. At the same time, it manifested a tendency to look at the individual in a much wider context. Man was put in a cosmic as well as a social framework, and was told that only by uniting with the whole would he find his proper place in the universe and in society without losing his individuality. The quest for a meaningful, intelligible and just world was thus answered by a vision of a final mystical reconciliation between the two antipodal elements of existence: the microcosmic and macrocosmic. Yet as fundamental was the conviction that self-fulfilment must be accompanied by far-reaching social and economic reorganisation. If the conceptual order of the New Testament or its various theoretical substitutes provided notably a frame of reference and a moral direction, anarchism supplied the social and economic substance.

The fusion between anarchism and the cosmological and moral world-picture of Christianity was the most influential and by far the most common of these combinations. Tolstoy, through his life as much as through his writings, was a seminal influence for the British Christian-anarchists, the

most prolific of whom were John C. Kenworthy and J. Morrison Davidson[1].

The Christian-anarchists conceived of an all-pervading universe in terms of an ever-benign Christian God in whose divinity man partook. Their millenial state was called the Kingdom of God. But they rejected the historic established Church as a source of inspiration, arguing that it had renounced its moral principles and was as authoritarian as any other state institution[2]. Theirs was a return to the primitive source of Christianity. The Christ of the Sermon on the Mount was the model of perfection towards which they aimed. He was the All Reformer, the rebel, the ultimate teacher of eternal truth, whether of divine origin or not. "He abolished all private property, and with it the State. He abolished all distinctions of race, rank, sex and intellect"[3]. Equally, the early Christian communities - being brotherhoods where things were held in common - were models to follow.

Anarchism was defined by the Christian-anarchists as

1. Arriving at the conclusion that private property and "all laws and power of coercion" should be abolished, J.C. Kenworthy (b. 1863) forsook the life of commerce in which he had been occupied and settled in the East End in the early '90s "to study social conditions and possibilities of work for a cause in which, save for the knowledge of Tolstoy in Russia, I felt myself absolutely alone". (John C. Kenworthy, Tolstoy (London and Newcastle, 1902), p. 214). This experience had furnished the basis for The Anatomy of Misery (London, 1893) and From Bondage to Brotherhood (London, 1894) which outlined his Christian-anarchist beliefs. Soon he was joined by other people. The intimate correspondence that started between him and Tolstoy upon the publication of his books was followed in 1896 by Kenworthy's pilgrimage to his spiritual guide, a journey he was to repeat. Davidson was born (1845) to a well-off family in Aberdeenshire. He qualified to the Scottish as well as the English Bar, but always worked as a journalist. His interest in radical causes was revealed as early as 1863 when he tried to join the Polish rebellion. In the early '80s he was present at the founding meeting of the SDF and wrote for The Radical. He was never to give up his devotion to radicalism or socialism. (For a biographical sketch see his Politics for the People (London, 1892). For Kenworthy's attitude to Tolstoy see A Pilgrimage to Tolstoy (Croydon, 1896) and for Davidson's see Let there be Light! (London, 1895). In turn Tolstoy found kindred spirits in them.
2. For an elaborate criticism of the Christian Church see J. Morrison Davidson That Great Lying Church (London, 1903).
3. J. Morrison Davidson, The Gospel of the Poor (London, 1893), p. 49.

"the Christian religion in its primitive purity"[1]. For them anarchism and Christianity pointed to the same elements as responsible for the depraved state of society. By the same token, the message contained in anarchism seemed to harmonise with the hopes of Christ and his followers for a high form of human relationship and with their vision of the ideal social complex.

In standard anarchist fashion, the Christian-anarchists attacked the state[2] and dismissed the likelihood of representative institutions ever benefiting humanity, on the ground that they misrepresented the people "about as effectually as the clergy misrepresent Christianity"[3]. Whether they shared Proudhon's solutions as did Morrison Davidson or Kropotkin's prescriptions as did Kenworthy, the people participating in this mood promised to alter the property basis of capitalist society, to redistribute material wealth and establish communal life. Fundamental to their thought was the conviction that the whole present political apparatus - whose very existence was laid deep in "force and fraud" - would be replaced by a perfectly voluntary society free from government[4].

Incomparably less rounded, coherent and comprehensive, yet deriving from similar sources, were the theoretical combinations which merged anarchism with western mysticism, spiritualist thinking, theosophy, cosmology, astrology and eastern philosophy, all of which were then gaining currency in Britain. These were in the main muddled amalgams of fragmented ideas assembled by two unconnected individuals, Carl Quinn and Alfred Gaynor. Their views were set down in no more than sparse literary publications. Quinn published his views in 1901 in a pamphlet entitled Perpetualism and again in 1904 in a series of articles in The Hackney Spectator[5] which in 1905 were reproduced in

1. J. Morrison Davidson, "What is Anarchy", The Weekly Times and Echo 29 July 1894.
2. J. Morrison Davidson, Christ, State and Commune (London, 1906), p. 6.
3. J. Morrison Davidson, The Old Order and the New (London, 1892), p. 98.
4. J. Morrison Davidson, Anarchist Socialism v. State Socialism (London, 1896), p. 8. For a detailed exposition of the ideal society as seen by Christian-anarchists see Kenworthy, From Bondage to Brotherhood.
5. The Hackney Spectator, 12 Aug. to 30 Sept. 1904.

pamphlet form. Gaynor's involvement in anarchism amounted to no more than a literary excursion in 1895 when he published two "books" of The Truth[1]. These views deserve some treatment here as, however unimpressive, they highlight the metaphysical element in the anarchist movement as well as the complexities of anarchist appeal. They are also illustrative of the diverse and sometimes confused directions taken within the movement in this critical phase of its development.

Their cosmos was a pantheistic living organism. Quinn enshrined the notion that "infinite and Eternal nature is your greater Self"[2]. Thus man shared a universal soul. "All of nature is our body and our body is all of nature", he reiterated. To him, nature was divine and so was man. In a similar fashion, all things visible and invisible were for Gaynor, "undetached part of the Great Whole". Moreover, "All life centres ... are miniature reflexes of Itself": namely, of the one and indivisible Absolute[3]. Quinn's socio-economic order was to be conducted on communist lines, while that envisaged by Gaynor bore the marks of Proudhon.

The theoretical threads running through these writings suggested that these metaphysical anarchists were cast in the same spiritual mould as the Christian-anarchists. Their concepts manifested a deeply religious frame of mind. Quinn, once an avowed Christian-anarchist, indeed conceived his unconventional religiosity "as a scientific substitute for the bankrupt Christianity". He called his new religion the Scientific Religion of Perpetualism. The religious

1. For a single publication impregnated with the same mood see the pamphlet Welsh Anarchism (Wrexham, 1913). The theories developed by Edward Carpenter bore a close resemblance to the sets of ideas discussed here. He integrated socialism, the American school of transcendentalism (chiefly Emerson, Thoreau and their disciple Walt Whitman), and the ancient Indian Upanishads into an original theoretical whole which both in its philosophical and social message echoed anarchist sentiments. Carpenter's philosophy was indeed occasionally referred to as anarchist. Yet his arguments were not wholly compatible with anarchist precepts and he himself did not fully identify with the anarchist cause. His relationship to anarchism will be discussed briefly in the next chapter.
2. Carl Quinn, The Scientific Religion of Perpetualism (London, 1902), p. 6.
3. Alfred E.H. Gaynor, The Truth, Book 1. pt. 2 (London, 1895), p.7.

influence on Gaynor was as evident. By his own admission, he welded various anarchist interpretations, particularly that of the Proudhonist G.O. Warren, with astrology, Indian philosophy and the Old and New Testaments[1].

The Christian-anarchists, for their part, showed considerable interest in metaphysics. Kenworthy, for instance, confessed to being compelled by mystical theories, spiritualism and medieval magic. The "world of spirit" seemed to him "to be not merely a sure hope, but an ascertainable and usable reality"[2]. In fact, this is where he diverged from Tolstoy who did not embroil himself in "mythologies, mysticisms, miracle and ghost stories" and rejected the doctrine of the future life and personal immortality[3]. The American transcendentalists were another common source of inspiration for the metaphysical and Christian-anarchists.

The communist-anarchist fraternity included Christian-anarchists, like Gorrie and Quinn, from its early days. However, from the mid '90s, the Christian-anarchists, whose numbers were steadily growing, began to coalesce into their own associations with the express purpose of advertising their beliefs. In June 1894, some of them got together to discuss vital questions and formed themselves into the Brotherhood Church in Croydon, "a name already used for many years by J. Bruce Wallace to designate his Christian Socialist movement"[4]. They could not join Wallace's church as he supported participation in political action[5]. The Church

1. Of the Christian-anarchists, Davidson was brought up as a Presbyterian, later occasionally preaching from Unitarian pulpits. Kenworthy was a Congregational minister. Other Tolstoyans were Quakers.
2. Kenworthy, Tolstoy, p. 246.
3. Ibid., p. 253.
4. The New Order, Oct. 1897.
5. In 1897 the word 'church' was dropped from the name as it was "felt that the facts of what we say and do are best left to speak for themselves". (Ibid.).

held meetings and Sunday services in London, Leeds, Blackburn and a few other places, and attempted to create co-operative enterprises. Its leading spirit was Kenworthy. In 1894, Kenworthy took another initiative in Croydon where he published the monthly magazine The New Order in which arguments in support of Christian-anarchism, plus reports of the activities of its partisans, were presented[1]. Kenworthy's convictions and oratory proved powerful enough to help generate a few Tolstoyan societies and experiments in implementing Tolstoyan ideas, although he himself did not fully participate in any of them[2]. Known in some circles as "the most learned Anarchist of British birth", Morrison on the other hand exerted his influence almost exclusively through writing[3]. Besides writing books, he was a regular contributor to radical papers, principally Reynolds's Newspaper, The Weekly Times and Echo and The Agnostic.

Tolstoyan societies which discussed social questions generally with an emphasis on Tolstoy's teachings, existed in London, Manchester and Derby. At the turn of the century, the Tolstoyan publisher, Charles William Daniel, ran Sunday evening lectures in a house off Edgeware Road in London, and issued a monthly called The Tolstoyan[4]. Later he was responsible for the monthly periodicals The Crank - subsequently renamed The Open Road - and The Healthy Life. From amongst his circle, the luncheon club, the Crank Table, emerged. A few of its habitués established the part-time commune in Wickford[5]. Daniel helped the anarchist cause by publishing books on the subject by Tolstoy, Emma Goldman, Alexander Berkman and Nellie Shaw (hers was about the Whiteway colony, which interested Daniel) and on matters in vogue in Tolstoyan circles, such as vegetarianism, pacifism and metaphysics[6].

1. In March 1898 the publisher, F.R. Henderson took over the editorship.
2. For details of these enterprises see ch. 2 pp. 140-49.
3. Peter Latouche, Anarchy! (London, 1908), p. 204.
4. In 1898 Daniel was the business correspondent of The New Order.
5. For details see ch. 2 p. 144.
6. In 1909 Daniel published his Instead of Socialism - a treatise on the taxation of land values, "based on the teachings of Proudhon and the economic theories of Henry George". (A tribute to the Memory of Charles William Daniel (Kent, n.d), p. 11). Also in 1909 he set out with the Tchertkoffs (Tolstoy's disciples) to visit Tolstoy. Occasionally, Tolstoy himself contributed to Daniel's papers.

The search for a more satisfactory and meaningful reality was not confined to the theoretical plane. There were practical experiments too. From the middle 1890s onwards, quite a few Tolstoyans took concrete steps to establish several rural communal settlements and co-operative workshops in the cities along anarchist lines. Disillusionment over the failure of the anarchist movement to serve as more of a focal point for disaffected elements and social misfits was not the only reason that a new mood had emerged, favouring such enterprises. Responsible also was the agonising realisation that the times were not propitious for a revolution, coupled with the undiluted determination to effect some kind of change. These enterprises will be discussed in the next chapter.

There is no trace of evidence that Gaynor ever ogranised any kind of following. However, Quinn, according to his own testimony, was more successful. In 1902 he set in motion the Perpetualist Society for Moral Fellowship. The society stayed in existence for a few years, had a number of branches and conducted its propaganda in Hyde Park. Quinn's spiritualist views had penetrated the core of the communist-anarchist camp as early as the mid 1890s when he was an active member. Just prior to his severing his connections with the anarchist movement, following the débâcle of the Associated Anarchists, of which he was one of the chief initiators[1], the communist-anarchist group in Canning Town switched to the advocacy of spiritualism under his influence. Sam Mainwaring reported to Nettlau that "Ravachol and a few of the departed comrades have appeared to them, and they honestly believe that they will be helped by them"[2]. Like other deviations, dealing with the supernatural encountered the enmity of most other anarchists who tried to put an end to it[3], probably successfully for no more was heard about spiritualism after 1897. Quinn preserved his anarchist identity for many years. In 1911 he even joined the British Socialist Party as an anarchist.

1. For details see ch. 2 pp. 109-10.
2. Letter dated 12 Aug. 1896. [N.C.].
3. Letter from Mainwaring to Nettlau, 1 April 1897. [N.C.].

There is also evidence that there were two spiritualist mediums in the community of Purleigh, who even took the trouble to travel to Russia to persuade Tolstoy to become a spiritualist[1]. Otherwise, as far as available records show, the spiritualist trend did not gain a foothold in the movement.

The latter part of the 1890s was an equally disappointing period for the Jewish anarchist circles. But it was at this time that Rudolph Rocker first became involved with the Jewish movement[2]. Rocker was a gentile, German anarchist who, until the period of the First World War was to inspire and guide the Jewish anarchists in their attachment to the cause and in general intellectual and humanitarian pursuits. His dedication to the Jewish labour cause was to earn him the life-long admiration of many Jews both in England and abroad[3].

Rocker was first introduced to the Arbeter Fraint Group in 1896. At its meetings he met Millie Witkop, a Russian Jewess, who was soon to become his "life's partner". After being refused admission to the U.S.A. in 1898 the couple moved to Liverpool, where Rocker was invited by Moritz Jeger to edit the Yiddish paper Dos Freie Vort (The Free Word)[4]. This was the start of his life-long career as a Yiddish editor. Although Rocker had as yet no command of Yiddish, he managed to edit the paper (first issue 29 July 1898). He also lectured to the Jewish group which he had helped to revive. The paper was helped on its way by moral and financial contributions from comrades in Leeds, Manchester, Glasgow and London. However, Rocker did not survive long in Liverpool. When he was requested by the London contingent to put the Arbeter Fraint back on its feet, Rocker,

1. E.J. Dillon, Count Leo Tolstoy (London, n.d. 1934?), pp. 154-55.
2. Rocker (1873-1943) was a bookbinder who left his profession to engage in study and literary activity. After a stay in Paris (1893-95) he arrived in London where he first frequented the German clubs and then attached himself to the Jewish anarchist circles.
3. See for instance Testimonial to Rudolph Rocker, published by the Rocker Publications Committee in Los Angeles.
4. In the mid 1890s Jeger together with Albert Levey launched the paper The Rebel, but due to quarrels between them, only two numbers appeared. (Rocker, The London Years, p. 108).

believing the British capital to be a more effective place for the publication of propaganda journals, willingly accepted.

Dos Freie Vort stopped publication on 17 September 1898. The Arbeter Fraint reappeared on 19 October 1898 and survived until January 1900. It was followed, on 16 March 1900, by another Yiddish communist-anarchist journal Germinal, which was managed as well as edited by Rocker, who by then had mastered the language. The object of the paper was "to acquaint its readers with all Libertarian tendencies in modern literature and contemporary thought"[1]. Germinal was intended to appear fortnightly, but as England was at war, it managed to appear only intermittently. Rocker and his wife were forced to become the compositors of the paper.

Almost all other Jewish anarchist activities ground to a halt. Rocker again moved out of London. At the end of October 1901 he arrived in Leeds from where he continued to publish Germinal. To his surprise he found that while the movement was "at its lowest in London" the Jewish champions in the provinces "had a big upward swing"[2]. Besides Leeds there were active groups in Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, Hull, Glasgow and Edinburgh. When the Boer War was finally over, new life was brought to the Jewish anarchist movement in London too. The Jewish renaissance thus predated that of the native anarchists by several years.

Rocker returned to London in the autumn of 1902 to find "a new spirit" in the movement. "Everything seemed to be going forward. Our public meetings had never been so well attended. The trade unions which had suffered during the depression of the South African War recovered, and a lively agitation was started for better labour conditions. The Arbeter Fraint Group was very active" and contact between the various Jewish groups in London and the provinces closer[3]. At the end of 1902 all were linked into the Jewish Anarchist Federation. The Arbeter Fraint which

1. Ibid., p. 144.
2. Ibid., p. 153.
3. Ibid., p. 159.

was resuscitated in March 1903 and enlarged to twelve pages with a literary supplement added a year later, was recognised as its organ. A new group called Germinal assembled to administer the paper of the same name which resumed publication in January 1905 after a two-year break.

During these years, activity reached a new crescendo. The Jewish anarchists set up new trade unions, organised strikes and orchestrated the struggle against the sweating system. The packed public meetings testified to their widespread impact. At the Amsterdam Congress of 1907, Rocker was able to report the existence of seven active provincial groups and four in London[1].

1906-14

From about 1906 to the First World War, the anarchist movement was to go through a phase of development in which it gradually, although haltingly, regained some of its former vigour. There was an influx of new blood, veterans returned to activity, individuals regrouped and meetings resumed. Freedom steadily regained the same number of readers as before the war, and its editor could write to Nettlau in a satisfactory and self-assured tone that "the anarchist spirit is reviving again all over the world, even in England"[2].

The International Anarchist Congress in Amsterdam instilled a new spirit of determination in the members. Although the English report was overshadowed by that of the foreign groups in England - as Freedom itself admitted - the paper promised to rectify this at the next congress[3]. In time, groups appeared in various parts of London, in Newcastle, Leeds, Liverpool, Leicester, Sheffield, Manchester, Cardiff, Southport, Swansea, Norwich, Plymouth, Bristol and other centres. Scotland, and Glasgow in particular, awakened and showed signs of renewed activity. Regional and national conferences again took place, and events like the celebration of Freedom's 25th

1. Freedom, Oct. 1907.
2. Letter from Marsh to Nettlau, 24 July 1907, [N.C.].
3. Freedom, Sept. 1907.

anniversary in November 1911 and Kropotkin's 70th birthday celebration in December 1912, furnished occasions for reunions of anarchists and long-standing sympathisers.

New initiatives took place in the journalist field and the publication of literature acquired a new impetus. Meeting places opened and Sunday schools and adult education courses were launched. Anarchist ideas again floated in the air and found some practical expression in the methods and attitudes of the industrial forces, especially during the period immediately prior to the outbreak of the First World War.

To put these events in their proper perspective, it should be added that some of the groups had only an ephemeral existence, that many initiatives were short-lived, and that agitation was still sporadic and dependent on the involvement of a small number of activists. New partisans complained that the veterans were too complacent and lacked the necessary vigour. Comrade Kitson, who together with Kean paid a short visit to London from Leeds, sneered: "Movement in London, you have none!"[1]. This he attributed not to a shortage of comrades, but to the following: "their concern is not so much propaganda as it is clubs ... and personal enjoyment and amusement ... they are satisfied with things as they are. The meetings held were the tamest and poorest attended, both by comrades and crowd, that it has been my lot to speak to". Even at the height of activity, just before the 1914-18 war, Nettlau lamented to Thomas Keell, who had taken over the editorship of Freedom from Marsh in 1913, that both social democracy and anarchism seem "old movements in the rear" of suffragism and syndicalism[2]. Nonetheless, despite all these qualifications the movement was gradually gaining in momentum.

What primarily boosted this advance was the emergence of syndicalism and its sub-division anarcho-syndicalism. In Britain, anarcho-syndicalism was a distinct trend developing on the fringe of the larger syndicalist movement, but as a

1. Freedom, Nov. 1908.
2. Letter dated 9 May 1914. [N.C.].

theoretical faction inside the existing anarchist body. In fact, it was the anarcho-syndicalist trend which, above all, was to undergo a period of expansion, while communist-anarchism largely rested on a tiny cadre of individuals marginally growing in the former's wake. The anarcho-syndicalists and those holding similar views were in the forefront of anarchist agitation, and were responsible for much of the anarchist advance during this period.

At the root of the shift of the ideological focus in favour of anarcho-syndicalist notions was the search for a more effective and relevant anarchist action in the light of the stalemate that pervaded the movement. But more specifically the anarco-syndicalist rise signified a search for a renewed contact with the workers. The former focus of communist-anarchism on a utopian dream of an essentially rural and communal society was now superseded by a vision of an industrial society constructed according to economic function. Communist-anarchism primarily appealed to the consumer while anarcho-syndicalism focused on the producers on the factory floor. Following in the footsteps of syndicalism, it offered a coherent way to gain control over the means of production without establishing a new centralised government. It suggested that the industrial unions themselves should carry out the revolution and then form the basis of the new society, without getting tainted by the trappings of power in the process. The appeal of syndicalist-anarchism as distinct from syndicalism generally lay in its insistence on purity of action: it waged war on concessions and compromise and pressed for total abandonment of parliamentary or any other conventional means.

In the country at large the new century was to witness a turn in the tone, orientation and eventually the course of action taken by a large number of industrial organisations and socialist societies. In the face of a reduction in real wages, aggressive employers' policies and the moderation of trade union officials and the newly-created Labour Party, the grass-roots labour movement began to display increasingly militant tendencies. This climate

furnished fertile ground for the implantation of ideas, which advocated the overriding importance of the economic struggle to be pursued through determined workers' unions. As a consequence, both syndicalism and industrial unionism, imported from France and the U.S. respectively, nourished by the awakened local traditions of anti-parliamentarianism and direct action, slowly penetrated the political consciousness of sections of the labour and socialist movements, directing their advance to a meaningful extent. The anarchist movement was also to benefit from these developments.

Anarcho-syndicalists formed their own distinct frameworks, some of them concurrently joining bodies with no specific attachment to anarchist principles. Most of them also worked side by side with communist-anarchists in recognised communist-anarchist enterprises. The relatively smooth acceptance of anarcho-syndicalism into the general consensus of communist-anarchism in the international movement, and the widespread support for it in the foreign and Jewish anarchist communities in Britain, made its growth inside the indigenous movement possible without much friction, although with various degrees of misgivings on the part of some communist and individualist members.

While the rise of a militant spirit inside the labour movement and the spread of syndicalist ideas were by no means products of anarchist propaganda campaigns, they were nevertheless prefigured and anticipated by the thoughts and activities of anarchists in Britain. Syndicalist ideas had already been evident in the foreign community as early as 1890s, paralleling similar developments in the labour movement in France in particular. The Jewish anarchists, though not avowedly, had also evinced such tendencies in their early days through their daily preoccupation with industrial activities. Later, under the guidance of Rocker, they would espouse anarcho-syndicalist views more consciously[1]. The indigenous movement, too, had been to some

1. Rocker reported to the 1907 Congress that the Jewish groups regarded syndicalism as a revolutionary means of emancipation. (Freedom, Oct. 1907).

extent susceptible to syndicalist reasoning in the 1890s[1], but it was not until the 20th century that a section of it followed faithfully and ardently the theoretical fusion between syndicalism and anarchism.

As early as 1903, under the inspiration and with the help of Spanish anarchists, Sam Mainwaring published an industrial sheet called The General Strike. But shorn of local help, the paper foundered after three issues. At the beginning of 1904, several numbers of a similar paper The Voice of Labour appeared in Glasgow. From around that time onwards the 'general strike', 'industrial action', and related concepts became more than ever central topics both in anarchist discussions generally and in Freedom in particular.

The pace quickened around 1907. In January 1907, determined action was taken by John Turner: The Voice of Labour appeared weekly from the Freedom Press under his editorship. The aim of the paper was to educate and organise the workers for industrial direct action[2]. Its contents were concerned with the general labour scene alone. Reports about developments in the anarchist movement were reserved for Freedom. Nine months later, The Voice of Labour had to close down again, but the fact of its existence at all already signalled the growing involvement of anarchists in union activities and the growing diffusion of anarcho-syndicalist ideas.

A new lease of life was given to anarchist industrial agitation with the emergence of Guy Aldred who lumped together the theories of Marx, Bakunin and industrial unionism[3].

1. For a discussion of anarchist attitudes to the industrial struggle during the 1890s see ch. 2. pp. 118-22.
2. The Voice of Labour, Jan. 1907.
3. Aldred (1886-1963) started his career as a boy preacher in the Christian social mission, from where he moved to the radical Theistic Church of St. Matthew . Converted to atheism, he next joined the SDF and subsequently crossed over to the Freedom Group. He soon fell out with its members but remained a loyal anarchist. His activity was much wider than that of most anarchists. It ranged from defending the principles of free love and pre-nuptial study of the physiology and psychology of sex, to lecturing on nicotinism from the point of view of a total abstainer, to publishing the banned Indian Sociologist which preached national independence for India and for which he was jailed for one year. For his autobiography, see No Traitor's Gait! (Glasgow, 1955-63) and Dogmas Discarded.

While Turner favoured and indeed practised agitation inside existing unions, Aldred set himself the target of replacing those unions by "Industrial Unions of Direct Action", based on the international solidarity of Labour[1]. No sooner did be advocate his ideas than he began to implement them. He organised Communist Propaganda Groups in the East End, Plaistow and Manor Park (all in London) and in Leeds, Glasgow and Liverpool. He himself became secretary of the organisation which he called the Industrial Union of Direct Actionists. In 1910 he launched the Herald of Revolt followed in 1914 by The Spur. Because of his eccentricity, his activities were fated to be solitary[2]. Still, his prolific output which he published under the imprint of his Bakunin Press, benefited not only the anarchist but generally socialist, radical and, in particular, free-thought causes.

The movement became more dynamic immediately before the war. At the 1912 conference in Leeds, a new journal, The Anarchist, was launched. It was edited by the enterprising Scottish anarchist, George Barrett (1885-1917), and published in Glasgow. It survived from May 1912 to January 1913. In December 1913, a new organ, The Torch, emerged from the Freedom Press, published by the new Anarchist Education League. In 1914 The Voice of Labour reappeared. A growing number of groups were beginning to surface at this time, but then came the outbreak of war, which put an end to what agitation and organisation there was. The movement melted away, leaving only a few score of people to carry on the fight. Kropotkin's support of the allied powers dealt a further blow to the movement. His ideological twist split the ranks and crippled their already low morale. After an attempt to resist the pacifist stand of Freedom, Kropotkin was forced to cast himself adrift from the movement he had helped to initiate and with which he had been consistently

1. The Voice of Labour, 18 May 1907.
2. A contemporary observer cynically commented: "There were those who suspected him of being in the service of the British police - chiefly for the purpose of discrediting anarchism by rendering it ridiculous". (Max Nomad, Dreamers, Dynamiters and Demagogues (N.Y., 1964), p. 95).

associated. During the war the remaining anarchists either joined the war effort or were suppressed. After the war, only a handful of comrades had survived the stress of the times and the ideological crises.

The period between 1906 and 1914 recorded a further expansion of activity in the Jewish anarchist camp, particularly in London. Mass assemblies of thousands responded to the calls of the Arbeter Fraint Group which was just a collection of youngsters. The Russian revolution of 1905 imparted further momentum. In February 1906 the Workers' Friends Club and Institute was opened in Jubilee Street to overflowing crowds of guests, including Kropotkin. Russian and other East European immigrants found a welcoming atmosphere in the club. Its premises, from which Rocker took care to keep out the more violent element, were also used by Freedom and foreign groups, and in this way occasionally helped the cause of unity in the anarchist movement.

Guided by Rocker, the Arbeter Fraint Group extended anarchist participation in industrial action. The few years immediately prior to the war were taken with the promotion of strikes. By 1912 the Jewish anarchists felt that "the Jewish labour movement in England, and especially in the East End of London, was strong enough to challenge the detested sweating system"[1]. The opportunity was provided by a strike of tailors in the West End of London in April 1912. Some 13,000 East End tailors, mostly Jewish, encouraged and led by members of the Arbeter Fraint Group, subsequently came out on strike in support as an impressive demonstration of solidarity with their mostly non-Jewish fellow-workers. The strike committee included Rocker and Kaplan who were jointly responsible for overall strategy. The paper Arbeter Fraint appeared as a four-page daily "to keep the workers informed of up-to-date developments"[2]. The strike was supported by other Jewish trade unions, and, sustained by the solidarity of various sections of the population, finally

1. Rocker, The London Years, p. 218.
2. Fishman, p. 296.

ended to the satisfaction of the employees.

According to Rocker the "first months of 1914 were probably the most active period in the history of the Jewish labour movement in Great Britain"[1]. The popularity of anarchism in Jewish circles, though not necessarily the adoption of its tenets, soared. But here, too, the war cut short enterprising initiatives. Rocker maintained: "But for the two world wars I believe the movement would still exist, for it had shown no signs of internal decay. It was killed by outside forces and events"[2].

In this chapter, a chronological overview of the development and vicissitudes of the anarchist movement's different currents has been presented. The next chapter will examine the distinguishing characteristics of this movement - its social composition, social and cultural milieu, motivating force, organisation, recommended means and actual activity. It is hoped thereby to create a more complete picture of the movement's specific character and to indicate the extent of its appeal and some of the sources of its failure.

1. Rocker, The London Years, p. 226.
2. Ibid., p. 56.

CHAPTER TWO. A PROFILE OF THE MOVEMENT.

Applying the term 'movement' to British anarchism may be somewhat misleading. British anarchism was not a movement in the sense of a closely regulated and internally co-ordinated body. At no time did it unite under one organisational umbrella all or even the majority of the exponents of anarchism. And there were ideological, ethnic and even class differences which separated the anarchists into multiform groups and disparate individuals, many of whom had no contact with one another.

Continuity was nonetheless preserved despite the absence of any enduring infrastructure, the fragmented nature of activity and the various divisions. Apart from being a collective term for the individuals who laid claim to the name or to equivalent titles such as anti-statist or libertarian, this amorphous entity was first and foremost united by fundamental attitudes, sentiments and aims, and vauge awareness of a common affinity. This tacit bond manifested itself in practice. Interaction, though never comprehensive or intense, occurred on various levels. Individualist, mutualist, collectivist, communist, Christian and syndicalist anarchists from time to time joined anarchist campaigns or combined in protest against the maltreatment of libertarians at home or overseas. Not infrequently were a number of languages - English, Yiddish and any of the European languages - heard from anarchist platforms[1]. Anarchist journals accommodated the expression of anarchist views at variance with their own; and, out of a sense of kinship, however strained, often indulged in extensive polemics to refute the points of divergence. The outside world, too, tended to conceive all self-styled anarchists as part of one uniform movement. Thus, however diversified, it should be treated as a whole.

1. The May Day demonstration of 1893 was a good example. Freedom, June 1893.

Social Composition

Embracing various combinations of wide-ranging themes and ideas, anarchism was potentially and in fact of compelling interest to radicals of different origins, class, education, occupation and inclination. Those who responded to it positively were a motley crew. Olivia Rossetti recalled that among those present in her milieu were "labourers and dockers... a young artist... a cabman, a few stray gentlemen, a clever but never-sober tanner, a labour agitator, a professional stump-orator, and one or two fishy and nondescript characters of the Hebraic race", artisans, and also several others, "among whom the loafer type was perhaps in the ascendant"[1]. According to another testimony, gatherings early in the 20th century were likely to be "one-third composed of poor harmless wretches from the Embankment benches, and two-thirds aliens"[2]. Freedom described the meetings of an East End anarchist group before the war as attended by "workers, parsons, Territorials, policemen and other rogues and vagabonds"[3]. The anarchist colonies, too, comprised an admixture of types.

However, the active core of the movement attracted less heterogeneous crowds than were found at anarchist meetings or within their sphere of influence. In fact, its social composition lacked some of the more conspicuous elements of anarchist movements in other countries, and thus illustrates the appeal of anarchism in Britain. Anarchism did not make the same incursion into intellectual circles in Britain as in France, Spain and the U.S.A.; nor did it influence them to the degree imagined in the public mind[4]. By and large, Victorian England did not engender a large-scale disaffected intelligentsia, and the intellectual element that was affected by the undercurrent, as well as by more obvious social tremors, tended to expend its energies in social reforms within the more established socialist or radical groups.

1. Isabel Meredith, A Girl Among the Anarchists (London, 1903), p. 47.
2. Latouche, p. 58.
3. Freedom, Aug. 1913.
4. See the section on horror tales in Ch. 5.

Over the period the anarchist ideal commended itself to a fair number of writers and artists, enshrining as it did a freer and more just society in which creative minds would be able to effect the fullest development of their abilities. But their interest was usually eclectic, transient and diluted with reservations. Kropotkin's thought, in particular, created ripples in intellectual circles, yet he did not succeed in mobilising them behind anarchist objectives.

Anarchism exercised a certain pull on some of the literary and artistic avant garde especially in the early days of socialism. Highly topical in the nascent socialist circles, it excited the attention of Henry Salt, J.L. Joynes, Walter Crane, Frank Harris, Cunninghame Graham, Bernard Shaw, the poet Francis Adams, and William Morris. The most multi-faceted intellectual of them all, William Morris - "craftsman, poet, master printer, designer of wallpapers", the man who "made the strongest creative effect upon the younger men" in the socialist movement[1] - was especially attracted by the libertarian attitude and did a great deal to advance the movement embodying it. But except for Morris, who retained most of his libertarian sympathies, all were intrigued by other political forces simultaneously fighting for hegemony over the labour movement. However, whether from an underlying ideological or personal sympathy, most of them would continue to express some interest in anarchism. A token of this sympathy could be seen in contributions to anarchist funds, protest on anarchists' behalf or participation in anarchist celebrations and commemorations.

Another socialist poet and writer whose philosophy was shot through with anarchist conceptions was Edward Carpenter (1844-1929). Carpenter, who had been ordained Deacon in 1869 but soon terminated his career, became involved with the socialist movement upon its revival in the early 1880s. "From that time forward", he was to write in his autobiography, "I worked definitely along the Socialist line: with a drift, as was natural, towards Anarchism"[2].

1. Ernest Rhys, Everyman Remembers (London, 1931), p. 48. For Morris's involvement with anarchism see Ch. 3.
2. Edward Carpenter, My Days and Dreams (London, 1916), p. 115.

His vision of a stateless and voluntary communal society, his rejection of centralised administration and the prime importance he accorded to the attainment of personal fulfilment and preservation of individual identity, paralleled the anarchist utopia. The goal of harmonious reconciliation suggested in his thought between the individual and the Universal Self - defined by him as the "one absolute Ego and knower, underlying all existences... the essence and life of the whole universe, and true self of every creature"[1] - bore strong similarities to the world view of the Tolstoyan and other metaphysical anarchists. He also shared with them the belief that the simplification of wants was the "first letter of the alphabet of the Art of Life"[2]. In the years leading up to the First World War his sympathies widened to include syndicalist ideas.[3]

However, Carpenter did not confine himself to the anarchist dogma; nor was he primarily engaged in the promotion of anarchism. He wrote for anarchist papers, contributed money to anarchist causes, leapt to the defence of individual anarchists and in the late '80s and early '90s was a member of the Sheffield Socialist Society which included a strong and increasingly militant anarchist element. Perhaps due to his geographical proximity, the small anarchist community which existed in Norton Hall, on the outskirts of Sheffield, in the late 1890s, heeded his advice[4]. But in the same way he supported and influenced other socialist and radical causes and organisations, some of which - such as the Independent Labour Party (ILP) - espoused parliamentarianism and standard democratic action. He lectured to the Humanitarian League, the Labour Church, the Theosophical Society, the suffragettes and various other ethical and political societies. The range of his protégés covered homosexuals, women, children, criminals and animals. His farm, Millthorpe, became a centre of pilgrimage for "Vegetarians, dress reformers, temperance orators, spiritualists, secularists, anti-vivisectionists, socialists, Anarchists and others"[5].

1. Edward Carpenter, The Art of Creation (London, 1904), p. 71.
2. Edward Carpenter, Angels' Wings (London, 1898), p. 242.
3. See his article in The Anarchist (Glasgow), 3 May 1912.
4. The New Order, Oct. 1898.
5. Carpenter, My Days and Dreams, p. 167.

Among the few intellectuals whose interest in anarchism was aroused during the 1890s, three were positively enthused by it. Their reactions were to take different forms.

Oscar Wilde, the arch-rebel of London society, was one of the famous intellectuals over whom anarchism exerted a certain fascination. This affinity to a libertarian spirit is clearly seen in his writings, notably The Soul of Man Under Socialism (1891). He, however, never became involved in the political activities of the movement, perhaps because he was, in the words of Shaw, "a snob to the marrow of his bones"[1]. His most overt gesture of sympathy towards the movement was to sign the petition to reprieve the Chicago anarchists.

Immeasurably more active in the daily work of the movement was the poet John Barlas (pseudonym Evelyn Douglas)[2]. So ardently did he pursue his enthusiasm that he became the only British anarchist known to have resorted to the use of fire-arms to strike at the seat of power. Making his way to Westminster Bridge one day in December 1891, he "fired off a revolver at the House of Commons, 'to mark', as he explained at the police station, 'my contempt for the constitution of Parliament'"[3]. He had been active in both the SDF and S.L. in the '80s and early '90s, spoke at meetings and organised outdoor propaganda. According to his friend David Lowe, the cause of his extravagant act was mental disturbance precipitated by the batoning he received on Bloody Sunday (13 November 1887), when a police clash with radical and socialist demonstrators left three dead and hundreds wounded[4]. At the time of the incident he was a member of the bellicose anarchist group called the British Nihilists, which laid "more stress on individual initiative and chemical force"[5],

1. Letter from Bernard Shaw to Frank Harris, 7 Oct. 1908, Dan H. Lawrence, Bernard Shaw. Collected Letters. 1898-1910 (London, 1972), p. 813.
2. A descendant of the Scottish heroine Kate Douglas (Bar-lass), Barlas was born in Burma in 1860, graduated from Oxford, worked in a Jesuit College in Ireland and then in a grammar school in Chelmsford, where his position was compromised by his socialist inclination. Thenceforth he lived in various places in England and Scotland. Eight of his small volumes were printed between 1884 and 1893. Henry Salt edited a selection of his poems. Barlas died in Glasgow in 1914.
3. David Lowe, John Barlas (Cupar Fife, 1915), p. 8. See also The Times, 16 Jan. 1892.
4. ibid.
5. The Commonweal, 28 Nov. 1891.

and thus probably inspired him to the deed. After the shooting, Oscar Wilde offered to stand surety for his good behaviour. It was largely due to his intervention that Barlas escaped with a light sentence. After his discharge he went to live in Scotland.

It was partly his experience of living in the East End among working people, "partly a deep and lasting friendship with a very remarkable member of the Anarchist group, but chiefly... abhorrence of the State and all its detestable enormities" that made the author and journalist Henry W. Nevinson "intimate with the Anarchists" during the 1890s[1]. He taught in Louise Michel's International Anarchist School in the early '90s, contributed articles to Freedom, and occasionally visited, and worked on, the anarchist farm near Newcastle in the late '90s. His anarchist frame of mind was shaped by a variety of libertarian influences. He "formed a friendship lasting for many years" with Kropotkin and Louise Michel, and was strongly drawn by Morris's and Carpenter's premises, seeing the latter as "the complete anarchist"[2]. He identified with Nietzsche's articles against the State, and years later felt that "If only mankind were not a little lower than the angels, I suppose I should be an Anarchist as Tolstoy was"[3]. But gradually he distanced himself from close involvement with anarchism. In the 20th century he was a liberal sympathiser of 'the human purposes' of the socialists, and a leading champion of the suffragette cause[4]. Yet he looked back with nostalgia to his more revolutionary days, and still held vestigial anarchist sympathies, especially for the ideal of a free and unregulated society. Rocker remembered "his speech at the dinner held in 1911 for the 25th anniversary of Freedom, when he emphasised the great influence of Freedom on him"[5].

1. Henry W. Nevinson, Fire of Life (London, 1935), p. 52. For an analysis of his literature see the chapter "The Cockney School" in Peter Keating, The Working Classes in Victorian Fiction (London, 1971).
2. Henry W. Nevinson, Essays in Freedom (London, 1909), p. 227. Nevinson helped Kropotkin to prepare the book The Terror in Russia (London, 1909).
3. Henry W. Nevinson, Changes and Chances (London, 1923), p. 76. Nevinson also visited Tolstoy in Russia.
4. Nevinson, Fire of Life, p. 250.
5. Rocker, The London Years, p. 186.

Despite their sympathies, none of these literary figures contributed in any way to high quality anarchist literature, nor did they constitute the political or intellectual elite of the movement. The first decade of the 20th century saw a new generation of writers of literary distinction, some of whom evinced some libertarian tendencies. None, however, tied himself in any way to the anarchist movement or its doctrine.

Alongside famous foreign intellectuals, Freedom Group contained indigenous members, if of less literary note, who engaged in intellectual pursuits outside the movement and also contributed their talents to the cause. Three of them were women: N.F. Dryhurst, a French translator by profession, and The Daily Chronicle's correspondent on "Irish history and literature, as well as for Shakespearean time"[1]; Louise S. Bevington, a poetess and advocate of free thought whose work was published by the Liberty Press, among others[2]; and A. Davies (pen name Libertas), a children's writer and the author of the allegory The King and the Anarchist (published by Freedom Office in 1905) in which she sought to dispel the negative anarchist image. However, their ideological impact outside anarchist circles could not have been great.

An examination of the tenacious propagandists reveals that upper-class British anarchism hardly existed (though such ancestry was not entirely uncommon in the foreign community). Neither did anarchism, despite its strong nostalgia for the organic society of a rustic past and its advocacy of communal, and largely agricultural living, have any bearing upon the rural population of Britain. Those who retreated to communal selltements were not peasants or farmers, but mostly city dwellers who had opted for a different quality of life. The majority of the activists were either of middle-class origin or self-educated workers.

The former included a high proportion of men and women with private incomes which enabled them to pursue vigorous, and particularly written, propaganda in relative comfort.

1. Nevinson, Fire of Life, p. 85. In 1909 she translated Kropotkin's The Great French Revolution.
2. For biographical details see her obituary in Liberty, Dec. 1895.

Yet contrary to public imaginination, as revealed in the popular literature of the time, the movement was blessed only rarely with the financial help of rich benefactors who allocated part of their fortunes to advance extremist politics. Foreigners of some means like Bernard Kempfmeyer, Max Nettlau, and Cherkesov sustained the movement with periodical injections of funds. Here and there indigenous men of means such as Edward Carpenter and W. Hyde subsidised various anarchist enterprises.

Another benefactor, Samuel Bracher, a Gloucester journalist, helped to found the Whiteway colony[1]. George Davidson, who held a high position in the European management of Kodak company, supported the anarchist school in Liverpool, the anarchist comrades in Glasgow and South Wales and the launching of the paper The Anarchist (1912). He gave those involved personal allowances and allocated an office for the paper in the Kodak building[2]. Sir W.W. Strickland, a writer, poet, translator and researcher of Slavic legends and fairy tales and a champion of anti-colonialism, established a life-long fraternal and working relationship with Guy Aldred, and assisted with his literary production[3]. Most of the individualist-anarchists seemed to have had their own private resources. Otherwise, in spite of the precarious financial situation of most members, it was they themselves who bore the brunt of the cost of propaganda and any activity. Rocker

> "knew people who didn't earn enough to keep body and soul together, and yet year in and year out denied themselves the bare necessities of life in order to contribute to our funds. Young girls who slaved in the sweatshops for a weekly pittance of ten or twelve shillings literally took the bread from their mouths to give the movement a few pennies. They did it gladly, with a sense of dedication, a sacrifice which they made willingly for a cause to which they looked for the coming of a better world"[4].

1. Hart, p. 79.
2. Davidson also assisted the Central Labour College in its early days by finding a home for it in London. It was largely due to his anarchist views that this co-operation came to an end. See William W. Craik, The Central Labour College (London, 1964), pp. 95-96.
3. For his anti-capitalist and anti-clerical views see The Extinction of Mankind (London, 1912); Christendom (London, n.d.) and Pagans and Christians (London, 1908).
4. Rocker, The London Years, p. 175.

In its protest against vast organisations, anarchism tended to work upon those whose livelihood seemed to be in jeopardy from industrial growth and uniformity, centripetal trends, speedy mechanisation and the redefinition of tasks. A survey of the indefatigable proletarian propagandists shows that many of them were vulnerable craftsmen and skilled or semi-skilled labourers working on their own or in small industries. Mowbray, Tochatti and Samuels were tailors by trade; Cantwell, Keell and MacQueen (the latter actually earned his living as a commercial traveller) were compositors; Rocker a bookbinder; Charles Smith, Wess and Day shoemakers; Kitz a dyer; Lane a carter; Turner a shop assistant; Mainwaring an engineer and Tom Bell a ship's engineer; Goulding a smith and ironmonger and Paton a milkman (and later foreman). Of the native Walsall convicts, John Westley was a brushmaker and William Ditchfield a saddle bar filer.

Alongside them crusaded people on the borderline between the lower middle class and the working class from comparatively affluent backgrounds, such as Nicoll, Marsh, Fred Charles (a café-house owner), and Barrett (who worked as an engineering draughtsman). While engaging in less manual occupations, they still shared a similar life style. Many Jews working in small, dingy sweatshops also saw the relevance of anarchism to their plight and became strong sympathisers. Large numbers of them worked in the clothing industry or in shoe and cigarette workshops.

To draw a sharp line between middle- and working-class anarchism would oversimplify the picture: the two were not mutually exclusive, the division in ideology, impetus and interests cutting across the frontier of class. Yet in a general way, and allowing for exceptions, such a distinction is valid and, moreover, highly instructive. The anarchism that was adopted and canvassed by middle-class partisans, though by no means of one stamp, still displayed like attitudes, temperament and manner of activity, and was diferent in emphasis from working-class anarchism. Apparently, the leanings of the two expressed their respective personal and, to some extent, class needs.

Concerned with broad, universal issues, the goal of the anarchist struggle was not merely the realisation of economic objectives, but was an expression of the belief in the duty to cater for material and spiritual needs. Moreover, anarchism did not limit its promise of emancipation to the working class but extended it to society at large. Nonetheless, the anarchist worker whose motivating force was presumably in the main rooted in his formative class experience, was above all fighting for the amelioration of his own particular socio-economic predicament. Indeed, he spoke principally as a representative of the impoverished strata, on matters that were considered his exclusive province, and seemed less concerned with a search for a moral meaning to existence or with issues concerning incursions into the private life of the individual. The members of the Jewish groups - alienated as well as disadvantaged - were fired primarily by a vision of economic security and social integration. Whatever their ethnic origin, the workers drawn to propagate the anarchist model of a good society were mostly of the communist-anarchist and syndicalist-anarchist faiths - both of which emphatically spoke the language of the class struggle and were concerned with the masses and their collective fate.

In Britain, where Stirner's brand of anarchism - a belief neither in revolution nor in any perfect society, but in living as a consistent egoist - did not attract attention; where radical society was less troubled by existential issues and more concerned with social reform, anarchists who enjoyed the essential amenities of life set out, like their less fortunate brethren, to cast off the economic burdens of the underprivileged and to promote social responsibility.

However, within this framework, many laid greater stress than their working-class counterparts on the needs of the individual. This is borne out by their ideological affiliation. Whereas communist-anarchists drew adherents from both classes, the social composition of Tolstoyan anarchism - which stressed the attainment of individual redemption - was largely middle- or lower middle-class. Even if the Tolstoyans by no means set out to promote the interests of

the egocentric individual, they still aspired in the main to end man's separation from his inner self and raise the individual to the highest ethical standards. By the same token, the individualist-anarchists, though they believed in the need for redistribution of material resources, were preoccupied primarily with individual production and consumption, and less with co-operation and social relationships. Under the influence of Proudhon, they thought in the context of workers' co-operatives and communes, yet their chief concern was with building a haven for the individual producer, where he could be free from all the shackles of a regulated economy.

Furthermore, those who were most readily responsive to the spiritual or humanitarian appeal of anarchism were middle class in origin. Correspondingly, the commitment of a preponderance of the materially secure anarchists appears to have been largely an expression of growing metaphysical alienation, weariness of material possessions or a rejection of current personal and social values. The anarchist streams for which they opted answered these demands. Although the vision of the Christian-anarchists guaranteed that all man's material wants would be satisfied, their millenium was categorically visualised as the epitome of simple and natural society. For the Tolstoyans the simplification of wants was the key to a moral existence[1]. The rich spiritual life they offered - the return to a sort of state of innocence - was clearly geared, though probably subconsciously, to the maladjusted and alienated bourgeoisie. The British individualist-anarchists concentrated on economic issues. But most of them supplemented these concerns, even if less vigorously than their counterparts in the U.S.A., with campaigns designed to extend individual liberties and pursue a revolution in habits of thought and social reform with a moral content, to a far larger degree than most of the communist-anarchists.

In like manner, as opposed to the proletarian element of the anarchist movement which concentrated its efforts on working-class concerns, these anarchists espoused current

1. J. Morrison Davidson, Christ, State and Commune, p. 31.

radical grievances. The Tolstoyans promoted vegetarianism and anti-vivisectionism. Women's rights, sexual freedom, sex education, the reshaping of family relationships, freedom of expression and various other attitudinal reforms gained attention in the individualist-anarchist camp. And whereas the working-class comrades, once socialists, limited themselves to action in exclusive socialist working-class bodies, a great number of middle-class anarchists involved themselves in radical associations - which consisted largely of people of like origin and attitude - and thus remained part of the progressive radical milieu.

Morrison Davidson "was not opposed to revolutionary struggle but he showed no desire to aid it or to participate in it", by action in anarchist bodies, alleged Aldred[1]. He was, however, active at various stages in his life in radical associations: the Peoples' League for the Abolition of the House of Lords, the Scottish Home Rule Association, the Democratic Club, and the Free Railway Travel League which he had set up. Davidson correspondingly defined his position broadly as "Opportunist-Liberal-Republican-Communist-Anarchist-Christian"[2]. Kenworthy joined the Humanitarian League's propaganda. Individualist-anarchists took part in the activities of the Legitimation League. Fisher was also a member and lecturer for the Council of the National Secular Society, and Seymour was honorary treasurer of the Society for the Protection of Hospital Patients. Quite a few of the individualist-anarchists only rarely, if ever, experienced working-class conditions, or closely observed the milieu of the labouring poor.

Other crucial differences presented themselves. While the version held by workers was readier to use physical means in revolutionary situations, middle-class anarchism by and large was more timid, and objected to revolutionary activities and to the violent overthrow of the capitalist system, although it was as revolutionary as the proletarian element in aim. Moreover, as opposed to the more revolutionary tendency, as represented by the communist- and

1. Guy Aldred, No Traitor's Gait! p. 110.
2. J. Morrison Davidson, Let There Be Light! , p. 178.

syndicalist-anarchists, which expected history to change its course suddenly in a final spontaneous eruption of the masses, neither the Christian nor the individualist school believed in the inevitability of the class struggle nor in the necessity of a social revolution. Both currents expected a gradual evolution of man and human institutions towards a free society, preferring to wait patiently for their ideas to take root.

The few indigenous middle-class anarchists who dedicated themselves specifically to the promotion of the interests of the downtrodden and were active members of communist-anarchist groups, were obviously closer in spirit, attitudes and interests to the comrades alongside whom they operated. Yet the Londoners among them, too, preferred to join the Freedom Group rather than the S.L. The former accommodated the more cosmopolitan and literary minded, and on the whole more moderate anarchists. Only after the fusion with the S.L. would the Freedom Group go through a proletarianisation process and become more heterogeneous.

Outside London only rarely would middle-class members ever attach themselves to local communist-anarchist groups. The Sheffield group of the early '90s, led into a volatile militant phase by two middle-class comrades - Creaghe and Dr. Fausset Macdonald - stood out as an exception[1]. Edward Carpenter also linked his political activity at that time to the group in Sheffield, yet, characteristically, his was a moderating influence.

Interestingly, in contradistinction to the Jewish sectors, the movement included very few working-class women. However, a large proportion of the middle-class activists were women. Figures like Charlotte Wilson, N.F. Dryhurst, Agnes Henry, Johanna Lahr, Louise Bevington, Mary Krimont, A. Davies, and Gertrude Shack[2], were conspicuous in their

1. Probably it was to them that Nicoll referred when commenting that "There was quite an irruption at that time of 'bourgeois' with plenty of money, which they spent freely", and strangely "were in favour of the most violent action". The Commonweal, 20 July 1897.
2. Shack, a German countess, was a member of the S.L. and active in the 1880s in the demonstrations against the infringement of the freedom of speech. She worked among the poor of East London and in 1897 took part in the Willesden School Board Election with the aim of growing out of religious sectarianism into workers' education.

literary, as well as more prosaic, work for the cause.

An awareness of the division between 'us' and 'them' hovered above the proletarian ranks from the start, though only rarely did it develop into overt antagonism against the bourgeois anarchists. For the bulk of the anarchists the bourgeoisie stood for the status quo, the incarnation of everything they distrusted and held in contempt. Reconciliation with the bourgeois world was apostasy and the imputation of 'bourgeois' offensive. That the anarchist struggle was untarnished by bourgeois politics was time and again emphasised and was affirmed as the distinction between anarchism and state socialism (as the anarchists called the doctrine of the social democrats). Breaking away from the tradition of respectability and from the conditioning imposed by the ruling elites were priorities for the middle-class anarchists as for anarchists generally. But for many anarchists of the 'lower orders', the déclassé were still tarred with the bourgeois brush.

On the whole, the individualist- and Christian-anarchists operated outside the daily orbit of proletarian anarchists, who thus paid them little heed. The recognition of the gulf between the middle- and working-class elements was first echoed in the divergence between the Freedom Group and the S.L. After the collapse of the S.L., the Freedom Group continued to be attacked by some of the League's veterans. At the conference in December 1897, the Group came under fire as "an inaccessible group of arrogant persons, worse than the Pope and his seventy cardinals,... fossilised old quilldrivers"[1]. David Nicoll, who harboured a special grudge against the group for not taking his side in his feud with Samuels over his return to the editorship of The Commonweal, referred to them as the "aristocracy of Anarchy"[2], and a "collection of middle class faddists who took up the movement as an amusement"[3]. Years later, Aldred described the group as "a sad collection of pedantic pretenders, mainly centred about K [Kropotkin]; a group of

1. Freedom, Jan. 1898.
2. The Commonweal, 15 May 1898.
3. ibid., 3. Oct. 1903.

admirers and not socialist agitators and enthusiasts for changing the social order"[1]. Although speaking from a personal point of view, both Nicoll's and Aldred's comments encapsulate the image the group engendered at least in some anarchist quarters.

Equally, a discrepancy was noted in the pre-anarchist Socialist League. In the opinion of Kitz the cleavage was expressed by geography as well as temperament: in the West End the respectable and literary anti-parliamentarian branches and in the East End the avowed anarchist comrades who "were confronted by a fierce struggle for existence in the midst of gigantic Labour conflicts"[2]. As it happened, the middle-class members of the S.L. who, partly through the influence of Morris, held views akin to anarchism, had completely dissociated themselves from the anarchist League by the early 1890s. "The advanced sections", said Kitz, "migrated to the East End".

Social Milieu and Motivating Force

To many anarchists, especially the working-class members, the anarchist milieu was more than the bearer of the message with which they identified. Their political world also became the source of social and cultural satisfaction for them and their families. Social gatherings and recreational activities were features of the anarchist movement and, as Kitz believed, were a 'far superior means of bringing a party together than the mere formal gathering to hear addresses and perhaps discussions"[3]. Literary evenings, concerts, recitations, dances, tea parties, theatre performances and singing lessons were often arranged. Some political meetings ended with a sing-song or a dance, and the singing of revolutionary hymns, sometimes even by a choir, occasionally accompanied open-air speaking[4]. Comrades socialized annually on May First, at the annual commemoration of the Paris Commune and the Chicago execution, and also

1. Aldred, No Traitor's Gait! , p. 303.
2. Freedom, July 1912.
3. Letter from Frank Kitz to the Socialist League, Nov. 1885. [S.L. Archives. I.I.S.H.]
4. The Voice of Labour, 1 June 1907.

during visits of foreign anarchists.

Typically, money in aid of some cause or person was collected through socials and dances. Children's parties with songs, dances and games were another familiar event. In the summer the London anarchists organised an annual outing and picnic in Epping Forest, and anarchists from other places met in a convivial atmosphere in picnics and outings in the country. Probably as a result of such social interaction, some anarchists indeed came to be related by family ties.

Members were closely associated in spite of the friction that such intimacy sometimes bred. When in need they relied on one another for assistance[1]. Collections were often started for the sick, unemployed or victims of strikes. Funds were raised for the families of imprisoned members and for defence purposes. This comradeship extended to the foreign anarchists who had found asylum in Britain. The local poor and unemployed also benefited from this fellow-feeling. The activities of the Jewish anarchists tell a story of inexhaustible effort and personal sacrifice. Special care was taken to provide for the strikers and unemployed in their midst. "Some really gave the last they had: there was rivalry in sacrifice and solidarity"[2].

The members' educational needs and thirst for knowledge were also catered for with the creation of adult educational classes and language courses - French and Esperanto for everybody and English for the Jewish 'greeners' and the Spanish anarchists in Liverpool[3]. The children of the com-

1. See for instance the various testimonies as to the helpful personality of Fred Charles, one of the Walsall's conspiracy defendents: Liberty March 1896; Carpenter, My Days and Dreams, p. 132; Laurence Thompson, The Enthusiasts (London, 1971), p. 50. Upon his release from prison in 1899, Charles married a rich lady who sympathised with his ideas, and settled in Oxford. Later both became involved in the Oxford Co-operative Society and became members of the provisional Committee of the Central Labour College. Eventually he joined the Whiteway colony.
2. Joseph Ishill, ed., Peter Kropotkin (Beverley Heights, 1923), p. 71. See also Aldred, No Traitor's Gait! , p. 309.
3. Esperanto was expected to foster anarchism by creating international unity and better understanding between people. For the importance of Esperanto to anarchists see Em. Chapelier and Gassy Marin, Anarchists and the International Language (London, 1908).

rades, too, enjoyed educational facilities. After all, re-education at an early age was calculated to free the children from bourgeois values and modes of thought, and prepare them for a society run on anarchist lines. To this end, Sunday schools were organised, most of which also provided educational facilities for adults.

Two Sunday schools opened in Sheffield and London in the early 1890s. The latter was held "in a couple of dingy rooms approached by a dirty staircase, in a squalid yard, and was presided over by Louise Michel"[1]. The children were an assortment of Russians, Polish, French and Italians. The declared purpose of the school was to let the children grow "with minds freely developed under kindly culture, without memory of the vile coercive so-called 'education' of to-day", and free of superstitions[2]. The school and teaching were free. Two visitors, Rachel and Margaret McMillan - both I.L.P. pioneers - recalled: written across the blackboard "was the single word 'Anarchie', but below this word there were pictures, in face of which we caught our breath in horror. One of them showed the gibbets and bodies of the Anarchists hung at Chicago" and the other "the shooting of Communists in Paris"[3]. The children, however, looked cheerful, happy and interested in their studies. Michel taught them history from an anarchist point of view, gave them piano lessons, and divided her meals with them. Assisting her were, among others, H. Nevinson who "endeavoured to instruct the little Anarchs in the elements of drill and orderly behaviour"[4], and Coulon (later found to be a police spy) who taught them French.

Among its manifold cultural and educational pursuits, the Jewish Jubilee Street Club in its early days housed a Sunday school for both adults and children. Lectures on subjects ranging from sex, hygiene and the new Malthusianism, to literature, theatre and music, were offered to the adults. The programme for the three children's classes comprised discussions on current events, physical exercises

1. Margaret McMillan, The Life of Rachel McMillan (London, 1927), p. 59.
2. The Commonweal, April 1891. See also Freedom, Feb. 1892.
3. McMillan, p. 60.
4. Nevinson, Changes and Chances, p. 123.

and many outings. The older girls were instructed in sewing; they brought the material with them and whilst reciting and reading mended their clothes[1]. An article in The Weekly Times and Echo described the New Year festival which 100 children celebrated together with their parents and friends as "most interesting and inspiring"[2]. After tea, poems by Morris, Carpenter and others were recited. Towards the end every child received a booklet by Ruskin or Dickens, and the small children were given toys. The events finished with games and dances.

An anarchist Sunday school, inspired by the visits of Francisco Ferrer, the Spanish anarchist educationalist, existed intermittently in Liverpool in the years preceding the war. Lorenzo Portet, a Spanish friend of Ferrer, who had settled in the city in 1907, encouraged its growth with both his energy and his money. The school opened in 1909 with 26 pupils, and soon reached the 50 mark. Following the educational ideas of Ferrer, the school set itself the object of providing the children with rational and scientific education to counterbalance the opinions prevalent in their daily schooling. Discussion classes on anarchism and general cultural topics were arranged for the adults. Kropotkin's The Conquest of Bread was the primary textbook. After the execution of Ferrer (13 October 1909), the school changed its name to the International Modern School in memory of Ferrer's school in Barcelona[3].

The school finally closed down in 1912, but similar schools opened in Charlotte Street in London and then in Commercial Road in the East End. The latter attracted 60 children and 30 adults. In January 1913 the number of children had already increased to 100. The place made provision for evening functions for children as well, and organised sports activities, Esperanto classes, a cricket team, dancing and outings.

Yet, however much the British anarchists developed their own secure surroundings, and however much their life revolved around the cause, they did not create an insular culture as

1. Letter from Wess to Nettlau, 13 March 1907. [N.C.]
2. The Weekly Times and Echo, 13 Jan. 1907.
3. Ferrer was executed for alleged complicity in the Barcelona rising of the same year.

did some of the anarchist contingents abroad. The experiments with counter-education, however limited, were meant to be the starting-points for an alternative culture, but in the main embraced mostly foreign or Jewish children. Only in the anarchist colonies did the indigenous movement actually take steps to transform the physical and social environment into which its members were born and from which they felt alienated. There, anarchists segregated themselves and attempted to build model anarchist communities whose underlying principles sought to break the bond of the bourgeois-capitalist world. Their life style revealed revolutionary attitudes towards property, family relationships, education, diet, clothing and behaviour in general. They even tried alternative farming.

Otherwise, the relative freedom enjoyed in Britain did not lead the British anarchists into a major deviation from conventional codes. Each different grouping had a life style and a pattern of behaviour, but these were not necessarily peculiar to it. It is not hard to see that the social milieu of the bulk of the anarchists had essentially taken the same form as any other working-class club or association. Personal biographies do not appear to show a radically different mode of existence either.

Divorced from their native culture, the Jewish anarchists and foreigners felt a greater need to cluster together and depend on their own kind. Bringing with them different manners and mental terminology, it was within the confines of these respective groupings that a true sub-culture had developed. Their clubs were almost cultural islands in Britain. In the Jewish anarchist community, intimacies "extended beyond the club into the homes of its creators"[1]. A commune of the Arbeter Fraint members existed for a while in London in 1896. Before the Great War the South-eastern wing of Dunstan Houses in the East End formed another "quasi-Libertarian commune".

1. Fishman, p. 268.

> "The Rocker apartment... was an ever open door. Kropotkin's own Lestki Chlieb i Volya was printed in the block, and he was a regular visitor. So were the humbler fry. Whoever came, invited or not, would be welcome to share a meal, and the only large room of the three was automatically placed at the disposal of those seeking a bed for the night"[1].

Though not on the American scale, a mutual aid organisation - the Workers' Circle - was formed "to help its members... in sickness and need"[2]. Its financial surpluses were used "to support progressive schools and progressive cultural work". Some of the foreigners even cultivated their own mannerisms, probably modelled on their anarchist life style at home. The German Autonomie Club "had a certain amount of Bohemian picturesqueness. Most of the men affected sombrero hats and red neckties; the women usually cut their hair short, wore Trilby hats, short, shabby skirts, red rosettes in mannish coats, and stout business-like boots"[3].

The mainspring of anarchist allegiance comprised a mixture of feelings, aspirations and needs. However, in view of the evident hardships and strain facing anyone espousing the cause, and against the background of a movement unable to offer social status, material gain or promotion, the motive could best be explained as intense and unconditional adherence to anarchist principles, and a tenacious belief in the absolute attainability of anarchist goals. A contemporary witness who for a few years took an active part in the movement and then veered round again to his former I.L.P. sympathies, explained the anarchist source of strength and perserverance by comparing himself to Barrett, one of the unswerving champions: "I could never share George Barrett's fanatical enthusiasm and devotion: always I'd a half-cynical skepticism upon which George used to chide me, but then he was really a poet and I was, by every instinct, a politician. Anarchist-Communism was for me an ultimate conception: for George it was an immediate reality"[4].

1. ibid.
2. Rocker, The London Years, p. 218.
3. Latouche, p. 64.
4. John Paton, Proletarian Pilgrimage (London, 1935), p. 237.

This attitude sometimes led some anarchists into interpreting even minute evidence of anarchist tendencies as the prelude to the fast approaching revolution. Barrett recorded the awakening of anarchism in Scotland with the data that various places in Scotland contained "at least some one interested in our movement"[1], and the odd local meeting invoked in others the comment "The flag of Anarchy is flying here"[2]. But it was this confidence that kept their iconoclastic spirits high. Since no immediate gains were to be expected before the revolution, other kinds of rewards sustained them. Total identification with the movement's purposes, and belief in their approaching realisation, permitted them a feeling of intellectual and moral superiority, a feeling of being of the elected few which may have compensated for political isolation and unpleasant reality.

Yet apart from his fervent faith in the righteousness of his cause, the satisfaction and strength of the ardent anarchist must have also derived from the personal interaction and warm surroundings provided by his social milieu. If the antagonism shown by society drove many potential recruits away, the familiarity and the esprit de corps apparent in many anarchist associations shielded those who remained from social isolation and from the inimical world outside, and served to deepen their commitment to the cause. The social environment they themselves engendered may thus account for much of the dynamism of anarchism, especially during lean years.

Organisation

The anarchist organisational structure was not fashioned at random. The way anarchists organised themselves reflected their aim of erecting a new order in which none of the vestiges of authoritarian institutions and behaviour would remain. Intrinsic to anarchism is the belief in the interrelationship of strategy and goals, namely that the instruments of change must be the foundation of the post-revolutionary society, and hence imbued with the same spirit and principles. Thus, the anarchists were determined wherever

1. Freedom, Jan. 1912.
2. ibid., Aug. 1912.

they operated to expunge any suspicion of authoritarianism from their own circles.

The question posed a dilemma. On the one hand, most anarchists recognised that some degree of sustained and concerted action was indispensable for success in the present or in the future. On the other, the political associations they saw around them - whether bourgeois-capitalist or socialist - all appeared to manifest some authoritarian elements. As a result, anarchist writings were pervaded by anxiety about the sheer principle of organisation. To anarchists, organisation per se threatened to violate the individual sovereignty and spontaneity on which they relied to bring about and maintain the changes desired. Given this tension, opinions were divided in the anarchist camp as to the precise nature of a commendable organisation[1].

All anarchists agreed that any combination ideally should be the outgrowth of voluntary activity and direct local control. A key principle was the need for decentralisation. Aiming at introducing a novel quality of relationship into the anarchist denomination, the anarchists hoped to avoid the defects inherent in any organisation by preventing the growth of hierarchical and centralised forms of association and self-perpetuating leadership or bureaucracy to which the members owed allegiance. Such systems, it was felt, in addition to undermining the staunchness and integrity of the leaders, submerged the spontaneity of the led. The leaders and the led were thus to be undifferentiated. On the anarchist principle that an individual cannot transfer his liberty and rights to a representative, the democratic procedure of the delegation of power and majority rule were also discarded[2].

The individualist-anarchists accepted these guidelines as infallible. Yet assuming that men were by nature isolated units inclining towards self-reliant and independent existence, they tended to be more suspicious of combinations and saw any preconceived framework as a potential enslaving

1. For an example of the diversity of views about organisation current in the anarchist camp see the debate in the conference of 3 Aug. 1890 in The Commonweal, 16 Aug. 1890.
2. See Freedom, Feb. 1890.

force[1]. Indeed, they found the attempts of the communist-anarchists to specify plans for the future social organisation contrary to the anarchist spirit of free choice. However, in Britain where most of the individualist-anarchists were of a mutualist stamp and therefore more compliant about the existence of social arrangements, there was no great difference of attitude towards propagandist associations between them and the socialist anarchists. Still, in practice, the individualist-anarchists usually remained apart from each other except for brief periods of association between several of them[2] As far as can be judged, apart from the basic apprehension about organisation, this was a product of the following related factors: their small number, the temperamental nature of some of them and their belief in the ability of inventive individuals to effect conceptual modifications in society and thus eventually in combination to generate structural changes[3].

Whether collectivist, communist, syndicalist or Christian, the socialist anarchists who heralded the ideal equilibrium between individual interests and social instincts and envisioned some kind of organisational system surviving in the future, accepted more readily the need for organisation in the revolutionary struggle[4]. For general propaganda purposes the one type which best stood the test of anarchist scrutiny was the local autonomous group consisting of a hard core of self-appointed agitators who, impelled to impress the public with an alternative social system, teamed up and hung together without conforming to a preconceived model. Outside London there was usually only one group in one place, in addition to the occasional Jewish or Tolstoyan group. In London itself a few communist-anarchist groups existed in the more successful days.

There were also, if infrequently, improvised bodies with more specific and immediate goals. Such were the ser-

1. See for instance Harragan's article in The Anarchist, 1 July 1886.
2. Interestingly, when a few of them did form themselves into a society, or participated in one, they were careful to assume official functions.
3, William Gilmour, The Creed of Liberty (London, 1895), p. 4. See also Tarn, The Individual and the State, p. 10.
4. Louise S. Bevington, Anarchism and Violence (London, 1896), p. 4.

vice organisations designed by the members of the S.L. to rectify grievances concerning the No Rent Campaign of the early 1890s. A No Rent League was founded to help the families of men engaged "in legal robbery and eviction"[1]. An Anti-Property Association was launched in Sheffield and Yarmouth, and an Anti-Broker Brigade was formed in London to rescue tenants' furniture before the bailiffs could take it away. Here and there bodies were set up to assuage the economic problems of the members like the Leeds Non-Political Permanent Committee on Unemployment in 1908, or the Jewish Workers' Circle. The communities and co-operatives built by the Kropotkinites and Tolstoyans were other manifestations of the anarchist view of free organisation.

The shape of each group was naturally determined by local conditions and the people involved. The character of the groups was nonetheless uniform. Having dispensed with bureaucracy and the pre-allocation of functions, the inner structure of each group was distinctly uncomplicated. The necessary jobs were performed by whoever was capable, willing and available. Only the domain of publication required occupational skills and full-time involvement: the editors of Freedom, the Arbeter Fraint and the printers of Freedom were probably the only full-time salaried officials, though their pay hardly provided a material incentive. "A suggestion that paid speakers and secretaries would be desirable for the welfare of the propaganda was indignantly repudiated by most comrades" at the Liverpool conference in 1913[2]. The "principle of voluntary activity as the driving force of the movement was found to be the only condition of a successful agitation".

The anarchists eschewed all systematic regulation and formalities and held fast to the orthodoxy of non-regulation. There was no registration of membership and no payment of dues[3]. Meetings were conducted without standing orders, a

1. The Commonweal, 1 Aug. 1891.
2. Freedom, April 1913.
3. This mainly explains why it is impossible to calculate the number of active anarchists. Besides, the number of groups and of their supporters fluctuated wildly over this rather long period of time. In any event, a more useful indication of anarchist influence than the mere numerical strength can be gathered from the circulation figures of anarchist literature. See pp. 135-37.

chairman only rarely presided and no minutes were taken. "Anyone could speak when and how he pleased"[1]. In order to avoid the subordination of the minority to majority will, the meetings were run without a mechanical process of decision-making. To illustrate their ideal, the anarchists resorted to a biological metaphor: the arrangement within an anarchist organisation was compared to the harmony between the various parts of the body[2].

If the anarchists never mobilised more than a few dozen champions behind their sort of programme in any locality other than London, they also consciously opted for small groups, a preference that reflected their objective of basing future society on small communities where individual freedom could best be preserved: "it is far better to have a network of small groups - even within one locality - rather than one large one" it was agreed[3]. From an anarchist perspective, small, self-reliant and self-motivating groups arising organically out of the needs and desires of the members generated improvisation, co-operation and solidarity, without resorting to artifical means or external incentives. Large, complex organisations stifled freedom and promoted uniformity, becoming "hot-beds of ambition, self-seeking and rotten beliefs in authority"[4]. Besides, highly populated groups were not necessarily conducive to change, while "a minority ignoring the laws can demoralise all governmental machinery and render it absolutely impotent"[5]. History taught the anarchists that "It is not, after all, immense multitudes that have accomplished great changes, but small bodies of men who have the courage of their convictions"[6]. Certain that the contagiousness of their ideas would spread anarchism like forest fire, a large and close-knit organisation appeared absolutely superfluous.

1. Latouche, p. 63.
2. What Anarchists Fight For (London, 1909), p. 2.
3. See report of the Liverpool conference in Freedom, April 1913. Various references to the size of anarchist groups indicate that the typical number of members ranged from half a dozen to no more than thirty. See The Commonweal, 3 Oct. 1903 (12 members); Freedom, March 1912 (8-10); The Anarchist (Glasgow), 3 May 1912 (20); Freedom, Aug./Oct. 1913 (20-30); Rocker, The London Years, p. 135.
4. An Anarchist Manifesto (London, 1895), p. 12.
5. The Torch, Aug. 1894.
6. The Commonweal, 9 May 1891.

Loyal to the principle of decentralisation, the groups always remained self-governing bodies. The movement lacked a unitary and homogenous organisation. The groups never assumed the character of branches and no core endowed with the authority to demand compliance or prohibit action was allowed to develop in any of the groupings. That this was also a deliberate anarchist proclivity is illustrated by the evolution of the S.L. The more it oriented itself towards anarchism, the more the branches became independent of the General Council in London. Soon after the anarchists took full control of the League, the Council disappeared altogether.

The more formal intergroup links were maintained by conferences and by the few federations that arose from time to time subject to fluctuating needs. Both reflected the anarchist conception of non-authoritarian and voluntary liaison, but also the limit of anarchist readiness to experiment with wider organisations. Conferences were fora where exchanges of views took place with the aim of achieving "greater unity and efficiency in revolutionary work and propaganda"[1]. Federalism was a concept intimately bound up with the general theory of anarchism. Promising co-ordination while preserving each group in its separate and independent existence, the federal system was considered the most congenial to anarchist demands for decentralised interaction both as a means and as an end. Conferences and federations were phenomena confined to the communist-anarchist ranks, to the Jewish and non-Jewish sections separately or, on occasion, in concert.

In the conduct of their larger associations the anarchists did not diverge from their common local practices. The federations had no council or other regulatory apparatus. Neither were paid officials employed to co-ordinate activities. Repudiating the delegation of effective power to a small group of representatives, the conferences and federations were open to all members. No elections or votes on resolutions took place on a majority basis. Only opinions were expressed, advice given and co-ordination planned.

1. ibid., 16 Aug. 1890.

This fragmentation of the organisational structure and the avoidance of the institutionalisation of roles indeed prevented a polarisation between leaders and led. There was no hierarchy on which the members spent their energy in an attempt to climb their way to the top. The status of the more influential members hung upon the intensity of their agitational efforts and individual merit, and not upon any official function or title. Those key figures were generally highly indoctrinated and committed fighters for the cause and therefore the mainstay of a group or the movement as a whole. The life of the movement thus expressed an authentic grass-roots reality.

In between conferences and the faltering existence of federations, the national papers - above all Freedom, The Commonweal and the Arbeter Fraint - filled some of the vacuum created by the absence of nation-wide administrative machinery. Their wide circulation and the reports, letters and announcements they carried in effect made them permanent media of communication between individuals and groups. Otherwise, the very lax horizontal communication was maintained by personal links.

The fluidity of the organisational structure was above all expected to give free rein to the "spontaneous play of energy", that "motive force of all advance in thought, in conduct, in action"[1]. Indeed, because the movement lacked a regulating centre, the personal factor was crucial to the progress of the creed. The map of anarchism at any particular moment reflected, perhaps more than in other social movements, individual initiative, however transient or limited in scope. Their literary production is a case in point. Anarchists were notorious for single-handed publications, mainly by those who did not fit into the pattern of activity and ideas of communist-anarchism like Henry Seymour, Albert Tarn, Dan Chatterton[2] (Chatterton's Commune. The Atheistic

1. Freedom, Aug. 1887.
2. Chatterton (1820- 95) started his radical career as a supporter of the Chartist cause. Subsequently he was a member of various radical associations - such as the Council of Land and Labour Leage and the Education League - and took part in the republican and secularist campaigns (Dan Chatterton, Biography of Dan Chatterton (n.p. London? n.d. 1891?). During the 1880s and until his death he could be seen at socialist meetings selling Freedom and The Commonweal alongside his own paper and the various leaflets and pamphlets which he had written and published himself. (The Anarchist (Sheffield), 20 Aug. 1895).

Communistic Scorcher) and Carl Quinn later in his life, but also by the more conformist partisans like James Tochatti, David Nicoll and William MacQueen.

Individual initiatives were even more responsible for political activity. Anarchist groups were usually created from the combination of a few individuals out to propagate anarchism by the specific medium of a propagandist paper (like the Freedom Group, the Torch Group and the Voice of Labour Group), or through any other means. In other cases new groups were sparked off by existing groups or emerged from within socialist bodies. (The latter was especially so in the early '90s when S.L. branches split over the issue of anti-parliamentarianism and in the period of syndicalist advance.) But often enough the creation, growth or survival of an anarchist association, or the invigoration of dormant elements, were the fruit of the zeal of a single soul. Whether established in a locality, purposely setting out to sow the seeds of anarchism in virgin soil, or migrating to take advantage of employment patterns, anarchist agitators set up an anarchist base wherever they lived.

Other socialist groups were also the ouctome of individual efforts, especially in the embryonic days of the socialist movement, but with the anarchists it remained a characteristic feature. The one-time anarchist John Paton related the re-emergence of the group in Glasgow after years of suspended activity to the "unusual personality" of Barrett[1]. The latter started by speaking from a soapbox in the city, and from a core of three the group grew to 50 - some of them veteran anarchists. Glasgow became the most important centre after London. The comrades in Belfast attributed the activity of their group to the presence of McAra and later to Barrett[2]. The impact of Aldred was such that a comrade wrote to The Voice of Labour: "it is a good thing for all of us when the uncompromising iconoclast comes along like the whirlwind, and shakes us from our slumber"[3].

1. Paton, Proletarian Pilgrimage, p. 218.
2. The Anarchist (Glasgow), 3 May 1912.
3. The Voice of Labour, 7 Sept. 1907.

The drawback was that in the event of these resourceful individuals not creating a soundly-based committed nucleus, their departure was accompanied by reduced activity or even the eventual disappearance of the group. A few examples from the two active periods will suffice. The predominantly anarchist branch of the S.L. in Norwich, which had started in 1886 as a small group of about six or seven, numbered more than 150 only a year later. The branch could then afford its own premises where the members enjoyed the convenience of a club and a library[1]. At a demonstration in August 1888 Morris could refer to it as the "stronghold of the cause"[2]. This development was to a certain extent due to Mowbray's activities and guidance of events. Yet shorn of material security (he maintained himself by running the Socialist and Tobacco Stores), Mowbray was forced to leave town. After his departure - though this was not the only reason - the group lost some of its former vigour[3]. In 1909 the Deptford group diminished its activity as a result of Sam Carter's departure for Italy. The illness of Barrett was enough to shelve plans for the reissue of The Voice of Labour in 1913[4]. The anarchists paid for the lack of an administrative infrastructure with dependence on individual fortunes.

The deliberate attempts to survive with minimal organisation prevented the entrenchment of a network of local strongholds serving as permanent channels of activity and as recruitment centres. The most outstanding feature of anarchist propaganda in Britain, as one member complained, was "the intermittent, isolated nature of our efforts. Here and there, from time to time, little groups spring up, have a period of strenuous activity, die, and are forgotten"[5]. A major source of potential influence was thus drained away. In the absence of any formal presence of the movement in an area, latent sympathies could not find concrete expression and were lost.

1. Branch report to the General Council (1887), [S.L. Archives].
2. The Commonweal, 21 July 1888.
3. See branch reports in The Commonweal throughout 1889.
4. Letter from Keell to Nettlau, 18 July 1913 [N.C.].
5. Freedom, Aug. 1911.

Because the anarchists were not aiming at achieving immediate economic and political concessions or at winning elections, and were only deliberating in passing on insurrectionary undertakings, strict discipline or a high degree of centralisation seemed not only destructive to an ethical development but also redundant. Still, to the extent that they strove to recruit sympathy for their perception of the transformation of society, their organisation proved inadequate. Not only was action disparate and sporadic and lacking in regular co-ordination, but with the absence of a mechanism for resolving differences of opinion, many meetings were spent on inconclusive debates. Kelly recalled that some groups "split hairs until there were no more hairs to split and nothing to discuss, and then died a natural death"[1]. In this respect, little good came of the various conferences, as none had an operative but only suggestive value.

The anarchists were proud of their uncompromising theoretical stand and saw in it a cardinal difference between them and other socialist parties. They were particularly proud of the "perfect order and harmony" ruling in their meetings even without the artifical regulation of a chairman or a vote[2]. Freedom described a Chicago celebration in Spitalfields in the following way: "There was no chairman but each speaker called upon the following one to speak at the termination of his own speech. The resolution absurdity was also dispensed with, each speaker expressing his feelings of sympathy with our murdered friends in his own way"[3]. This was a verification of their premise that authoritarian means were indeed dispensable. One of the members explained that "the very fact that there are differences of opinion is an indication of vitality and earnestness... it makes it easier to get at the real solution of the problem"[4].

The anarchists continued to be proud of their unique course of action. Yet in the mid 1890s it became increasingly evident that after a decade of intense if isolated

1. Harry Kelley's MS.
2. See The Commonweal, 9/16 Aug. 1890.
3. Freedom, Dec. 1889.
4. H.H. Duncan, A Plea for Anarchist Communism (Aberdeen, 1893), p. 4.

propaganda efforts, the movement only consisted of several diminutive factions, none of which could claim, singly or collectively, a significant national following or promise an imminent eruption. Realising this, some anarchists became more introspective and in their search for explanations also turned to the area of organisation. If previously criticism came from non-anarchists[1], now professed anarchists started to question the underlying assumptions of anarchist attitudes to organisation, and some even left the movement "disgusted with the lack of system, want of order"[2]. Awareness of the need for better organisation also gave birth to practical suggestions for improvements.

The first attempt at a drastic organisational change occurred when the feeling that the movement was "stagnant and listless, dull and apathetic"[3], prompted about a dozen members to cast around for alternative courses of action. The Associated Anarchists were formed at a meeting convened on 16 December 1895 at Kings Cross "with the aim and object of propagating the principles of Anarchist Communism by organised effort"[4]. In this spirit, Banham from the North of England was elected general secretary, T. Reece, treasurer, and Carl Quinn correspondence secretary.

Finding the main cause for the state of the movement to be the anarchist tendency "to separate whenever a disagreement takes place" - a policy which in their view turned the meetings into "absurd farces and ridiculous frauds" - those anarchists proposed to work in harmony by accepting majority rule, or as they termed it, 'minority consent'[5]. Members would then be able, it was maintained, to reach agreement on common goals and work effectively towards them.

The Associated Anarchists were very careful to stress that the majority would not decide but only "guide collective action for those who desire collective action", and that the individual would always have the right to abstain.

1. See the letter from Robert Banner to the Council of the S.L. (dated 5 April 1886) in which he declared: "It is not by anarky [sic] but by organisation progress will be made". [S.L. Archives].
2. Hart, p. 39.
3. Carl Quinn, Manifesto of the Associated Anarchists (London, 1895), p.2.
4. The Alarm, 26 July 1896.
5. Quinn, Manifesto, p. 2.

They further suggested that post revolutionary society and industry should also be conducted in this spirit of mutual agreement and association. Meanwhile, the members should be subjected to a more rigid routine than before: "any associate absenting himself... from the society for a period of more than three months shall be considered a non-associate, unless otherwise resolved... every associate in work consents to contribute weekly towards the funds of the society... the branch group shall be based upon the preceding agreements... the officials of each group to be a Secretary, Treasurer, librarian and chairman"[1].

The change of procedure by no means improved matters for the Associated Anarchists and the group soon degenerated into a squabbling faction. Dissension arose principally as to the management of their organ The Alarm. Two of the members "shut the door in the face of the other 'brothers', who, in their turn, 'burgled' the premises at dead of night. Then the minority called in the police"[2]. After a period of reunion "the majority found that this time the minority had sold up all the happy home and pocketed the proceeds!"

The main base of the Associated Anarchists was in Canning Town with only very sparse support in Deptford, Clerkenwell and outside London. Elsewhere, their move brought upon them the wrath of many anarchists. For The Torch the Associated Anarchists "cut the ties between themselves and all whose Anarchism is more than a make-believe, and have proven themselves to be nothing but Social-Democrats in disguise"[3]. Liberty declared that with this support of voluntary submission they relinquished their right to be called exponents of anarchism[4].

This short-lived experiment with tighter organisation thus proved inappropriate. It represented a theoretical departure which the inner logic of anarchism could not accommodate. Indeed, whereas from now on anarchists would be increasingly willing to experiment and acquiesce in better co-operation between groups, the vulnerable area of intra-

1. The Associated Anarchists (London, 1896?), p. 2.
2. Hart, p. 36.
3. The Torch, March 1896.
4. Liberty, March 1896.

group procedure and discipline remained more sensitive. In addition, perhaps any serious reconsideration of the organisational structure was still premature in the mid '90s. As was later admitted, it was in the next decade that "a great change has taken place in the movement... Before that period individual action was considered sufficient in itself to bring about the emancipation of the people; but this idea has faded as the movement has come into closer touch with the workers"[1]. In the next decade it was frequently said that "anarchism insists on organisation of society, organisation minus authority"[2].

Indeed, the growing evidence of the British movement's decline was increasingly ascribed "to the fact that there has been no system of organisation or intercommunication between the various groups"[3]. Federations were to become a more common practice. But it was chiefly the rise of anarcho-syndicalism which, while putting the anarchist movement on its feet again, also influenced the organisational thinking of its members.

Under anarcho-syndicalism, the workers were to be organised in industrial units, each governed from below, "recognising only the organic agreement of all"[4]. These organisations were singled out as both the means to spark off the revolution and the basis of the post revolutionary society where workers would manage their respective industries. The activities of the workers in each industry were to be co-ordinated on a federal basis, with no centralised authority or democratic system of representation to impose its decisions from above. The underlying assumption being that an efficient organisation would increase rather than decrease the strength of individuals, the anarchists who embraced syndicalist ideas stipulated that the danger of organisation "is more than compensated by the new world it opens to Anarchist activities"[5].

1. Freedom, Oct. 1907. Report from the International Anarchist Congress in Amsterdam.
2. ibid.
3. Harry Kelly's MS.
4. Rudolph Rocker, Anarchism and Anarcho-Syndicalism (London, 1973), p. 33. (First published in 1938).
5. Freedom, Oct. 1907.

The growth of anarcho-syndicalists inside the existing anarchist ranks enabled them to criticise from within and be heard with more trust. Paton, a new recruit to anarchism, more than once raised his voice against the loose organisation of the movement, assuring the comrades that decentralisation did not necessarily entail lack of organisation and that in order to be efficient it was necessary to link up "the various local activities into one cohesive whole, by the application of the principles of mutual aid and mutual encouragement to our Anarchist propaganda"[1]. In this he was giving vent to sentiments shared by others.

In the face of this change of mood, the communist-anarchists felt obliged to reaffirm their commitment to purity of action. "Compromise, may mean success to organisations, but it invariably means death to great principles" it was insisted in an article entitled "The Cures of Compromise"[2]. Yet to all appearances, the movement, on the whole, became more willing than before to rethink its position and to take steps to tighten the organisational structure with a view to placing the anarchist movement "on a sounder basis than before"[3]. There was frequent acknowledgement of the value of organisation, a greater determination to achieve federal unity and more attempts to find common denominators and even means of running groups more efficiently.

At an anarchist conference it was acknowledged that the newly-created International Anarchist Federation of the English Provinces (12 October 1907) "proved the necessity of its existence, for since its inception... it had spread... awakening both an interest and a keen desire... to enter the fray for freedom with more vigour"[4]. A month later the new Swansea group attributed its creation to the Federation, and confirmed the participants' enthusiastic acknowledgement of the value of organisation[5]. The Leeds conference in 1912

1. ibid., Aug. 1911.
2. ibid., Sept. 1913.
3. ibid., April 1913. See also the four-page leaflet What Anarchists Fight For.
4. ibid., Jan. 1908.
5. ibid., Feb. 1908.

adopted the proposal that the country would be covered by three federation areas with the object of rendering propaganda "more effective"[1]. In the next big conference, in Liverpool, concessions were made in the procedural field too; a printed agenda was sent to all who intended to be present, and though it was still "found unnecessary to have a chairman", a secretary took notes of the conference[2]. It was also proposed that "a propaganda secretary be chosen... for the purpose of serving as a reference directory as to the groups, speakers etc., in each locality".

In the same period, certain that "the time has arrived when definite measures are necessary to confirm sympathisers in their sympathy and make converts of them" the East London group decided to issue membership cards "for the purpose of providing some bond between the comrades", and appointed a secretary to "arrange for a systematic change of speakers", and the creation of a library[3]. Paton described how the inner workings of his group were affected by the new concepts. At first, strong emphasis was laid on purity of principles in an attempt "to be a practical example of the free commune"[4]. Only the office of a secretary "was recognised as a regrettable necessity". Things, however, "moved smoothly and effectively", according to him, only when Barrett agreed to be a chairman, conducted meetings properly and determined with Paton in advance "all the activities of the free commune in efficient bureaucratic style", and no longer left the procedure at the discretion of the meeting as at the outset.

The 1914 Newcastle conference had on its agenda the "linking up of groups"[5]. Although the fear of organisation outweighed tactical considerations and all agreed that "a very close union was not possible", the proceedings and other contemporary expressions indicated a basic willingness to contemplate structural changes[6]. It is thus possible that the

1. ibid., March 1912.
2. ibid., April 1913.
3. ibid., Oct. 1913.
4. Paton, Proletarian Pilgrimage, p. 220.
5. Freedom, May 1914.
6. See for instance The Torch, Jan. 1914.

movement had entered upon a new stage of development from an organisational point of view when it was interrupted by the First World War.

The Means Advocated

In principle, anarchists believed "in no hard and fast universal rules of conduct", letting "each judge for himself what it is right for him personally to do"[1]. Consonant with this principle, the protagonists in this colourful and amorphous movement recommended various, sometimes even divergent, methods to bring about the necessary changes. Yet, as on the issue of organisation, all shared some axioms with respect to ways and means.

Belonging to an unconstitutional movement of dissent, anarchists everywhere were marked by their total opposition to the use of existing legislative procedures or any of the organs of state as tools for social transformation. They were determined to by-pass the standard political channels of Parliament, parties and elections in order to achieve the fundamental changes they desired[2]. Participation in the conventional political system, which the anarchists held responsible for the protection of the exploitative economic order and for the furtherance of prejudices and wrong thinking in society, would not only compromise the position of the revolutionaries and separate them from the masses, but also promote the existence of this very system. Even in a socialist guise, the preservation of the state and its apparatus would perpetuate the rule of might, the anarchists further suggested, and curb developments towards a condition of freedom. Only by opting out of the bourgeois order would its fall be accelerated.

This formed a minimal definition of anarchism. Anyone who did not adopt this position could not be considered an anarchist. Beyond it, opinion was divided in the British camp as well as elsewhere. Yet whatever method and type of

1. Freedom, May 1893.
2. See for instance David Nicoll's article "The Parliamentary Fraud" in The Commonweal, 6 Sept. 1890, or the Edinburgh anarchist group's version of this position: W.K. Hall, The Ballot Box a Farce (1896).

recruits were advocated, the British movement was in essence educational. It was educational in the sense that it sought to base its strategy on enlightenment, and not only by the dissemination of what was seen as knowledge and information, but also by raising the consciousness of the people, in whose innate reason anarchists believed, and by making them aware of their interests and their ability to attain them.

Education of the masses had been the major concern of all anarchists since the days of Winstanley and Godwin. More than anything else, rational instruction was seen as the very condition for the realisation of anarchist aims. The whole social fabric, it was argued, was anchored in certain prejudices[1]. As long as people believed in them the system was safe and secure. The role of the committed anarchist - the one who had already fathomed the universal truths - was to shatter people's faith in these underlying principles and unmask the "real causes of distress"[2], and thus render the existing order ever more vulnerable.

An equally fundamental conviction was the belief in man's instinct to revolt and his inborn urge for freedom, instanced in history by the recurrent spontaneous risings of the masses[3]. Indeed, the revolutionary task was assigned to the oppressed themselves and not to any leader or elite group. The anarchist was thus a catalyst, not only in spurring the masses to action by converting them to anarchism, but also by making them conscious of their dormant instincts and historic mission to liberate themselves from the chains of authority.

There were anarchists who broadened the concept of education to encompass 'propaganda by the deed', namely, the perpetration of ideologically motivated acts of violence as means of mobilising and instilling total commitment in the masses. Far from representing anarchist consensus, such calculations found even less echo in Britain, where indigenous groups were united by a preference for stimulating the faculty of reason and the spirit of revolt by persuasive argu-

1. Tarn, The Individual and the State, p. 3.
2. Charlotte Wilson in The Practical Socialist, Jan. 1886.
3. Freedom, Aug. 1887.

ments. Operating in a country where it was possible to keep the revolutionary spirit alive and visible by the spoken and written word, most of the British anarchists accepted neither the utility of violence in their midst, nor its normative justification[1].

Indeed, two whole schools within the wider movement considered the logic of force immoral and un-anarchistic: the individualist-anarchists on the grounds that no individual had a right to govern his friends with might[2], and the Christian-anarchists that the "struggle and passion of warfare destroy in men the right feeling, the clear judgement necessary to establish a beneficient social system"[3]. And if the individualist-anarchist, believing in the sacred right of the individual to resist intrusion, grudgingly tolerated violent resistance to oppression[4], the Christian-anarchist renounced violence in any form. The individual was urged to follow Christ's message of love, avoid any exposure to aggression, even if provoked, and behave in a gentle and benevolent way to his fellow man[5]. As a corollary, both schools recommended passive resistance as a means of combatting the system[6]. This mild and non-violent form of action denoted the repudiation of all participation in government, and non-co-operation with the organs of authority, including for instance, the refusal to pay taxes. Otherwise, the two schools primarily put their faith in education. Mental growth was relied upon to lead to the liberation of the suppressed. Therefore, in their view, the "man who does most service in England now is he who most persuades the people... of the life of peace, plenty and noblemen"[7].

The employment of violence was by no means ruled out in the communist- and syndicalist- anarchist camps, but rather

1. See Samuels in The Commonweal, 31 March 1894, and Nicoll in The Anarchist (Sheffield), 18 March 1894.
2. G.O. Warren, Freedom (London, 1893), p. 3.
3. Kenworthy, The Anatomy of Misery, p. 94.
4. The Anarchist, Jan. 1887. See also Free Exchange, May 1892.
5. Kenworthy, From Bondage to Brotherhood, p. 124.
6. See The Anarchist, July 1887; Morrison Davidson, Anarchist Socialism v. State Socialism, p. 10; Kenworthy, From Bondage to Brotherhood, p. 135.
7. Kenworthy, From Bondage to Brotherhood, p. 49.

depended upon contingencies. Violence was accepted as a measure of self-defence; when originating from the people; or if "other means have failed"[1]. It was also readily assumed that the revolution would be accompanied inevitably by violence. But violence was overwhelmingly rejected as a revolutionary aim in itself by the majority of the indigenous adherents of these two revolutionary faiths.

That British anarchism was guided by the policy of intellectual, if forceful, persuasion of all the oppressed in the appositeness of revolutionary tactics, needs stressing not only because it was a typical feature of the British movement, but especially because this facet was throughout the period overshadowed by a prevalent identification of anarchism with violent tactics. A discussion of the different and changing attitudes to the attainment of goals within British anarchism will demonstrate the invalidity of this conception.

It was typical of the British anarchist movement that its first society, the Freedom Group, set itself up as a study group whose aim it was to spread the message of anarchism chiefly by the written word. Accordingly, the workers were given the standard warnings against the constitutional road and piecemeal reforms and instructed that "nothing short of expropriation on a vast scale, carried out by the workmen themselves, can be the first step towards a reorganisation of our production on Socialist principles"[2]. But no programme of action was yet formulated for anarchist activists.

The overriding objective of the early Socialist League was to make the workers understand the need to sweep "away class domination and privilege"[3]. The anarchists in the League initially concurred in this objective and emphasised that this was how the propagandist should pursue his aims. Joseph Lane, one of the leaders of the League's anarchist faction, summed up his suggested policy in the words: "educate, educate, educate"[4].

1. Charlotte Wilson in The Practical Socialist, Jan. 1886.
2. Freedom, Jan. 1887.
3. William Morris in The Commonweal, 21 Sept. 1889.
4. Joseph Lane, An Anti-Statist Communist Manifesto (Orkney, 1978), p. 37. (First published in 1887.)

The spread of anarchism and the rise of other anarchist groups demanded more specific and immediate suggestions and compelled the Freedom Group to define its position more precisely. From the late 1880s, its paper was talking in terms of the task of the committed anarchist.

The general discontent at the turn of the '80s, the growing trade union militancy and its extension among the unskilled, appeared to open up a promising revolutionary field of activity. The Dock Strike of summer 1889 - "one of the most singular strikes of modern times"[1] - unleashed the greatest optimism so far as to the future course of events[2]. Through the strike the workers demonstrated the hoped-for solidarity and determination and their potential for revolutionary action. This new situation sparked off an extensive debate about the labour question. The principal points at issue were the wisdom of permeation into trade unions, the use of the industrial weapon, and labour goals in general. The polemic that ensued prefigured and indeed contained the solutions later put forward by the anarcho-syndicalists.

In declaring war on the present system, the anarchist intentionally avoided advocating the use of temporary improvements. His sights were set on the social revolution, on the ultimate aim of total liberation from political authority and capitalist economy. Every step was measured in relation to this supreme objective, and if it was adjudged as failing to carry in itself the seeds of a revolution, it was dismissed as unworthy of anarchist exertion. Moreover, palliatives were generally seen as aggravating rather than bettering the conditions of the trade and, by distracting the worker from his true purpose, as destructive of the revolutionary aim[3]. If the workers were going to fight for anything less than the abolition of the wage system and the seizure of the means of production, then "their case is hopeless", it was time and again

1. Kitz in The Commonweal, 12 Oct. 1889.
2. For the sympathetic reaction to the strike and the hopes it generated see Freedom, Oct. 1889.
3. The Commonweal, 1 Nov. 1890.

affirmed[1].

Yet principles aside, these representatives of labour interest, as the anarchists saw themselves, could not remain wholly unmoved by the workers' struggles for better conditions. When demands for higher wages or the shorter working day were actually advanced, purist anarchist pronouncements alternated with expressions of sympathy, and occasionally even assumed a somewhat apologetic note[2]. Without losing sight of the final revolutionary aim or the need to strive constantly for its fulfilment, there were anarchists who supported, or at least tolerated, campaigns for half-measures, so long as the workers "keep it clearly in their heads that it is their own active determination" and not the parliamentary bill, that would bring the changes about[3]. Assigning priority to the industrial scene, the Jewish anarchists, in particular, tended to harbour fewer reservations about economic reforms. They believed that the workers "must stand out for an immediate betterment of their lot" as well as declare war on the prevailing economic system[4]. The conflict between intellect and emotion thus generated a measure of ambiguity which spilt over into anarchist policy towards trade unions and the industrial struggle[5].

From an anarchist perspective, trade unions were in principle permanent organisations, and in practice centralist, exclusive and moderate, ruled by officialdom and elitism, and guided by pitifully narrow aims[6]. Yet, on the other hand, the trade unions, especially the new ones, had proved "very valuable in helping some at least of the workers to hold their own against the ceaseless aggressions of the capitalist class"[7], and most important of all, were naturally ripe for weaning into anarchist policies and aims. They were self-reliant, free and spontaneous workers' assoc-

1. ibid., 15 Nov. 1890.
2. See for instance Mowbray's address to the striking tailors, The Commonweal, 30 May 1891.
3. Freedom, May 1890.
4. Rocker, The London Years, p. 168.
5. For the ambivalent attitude to the campaign for the eight-hour day see Freedom, May 1890 and May/June 1895; The Anarchist Labour Leaf, May 1890; The Commonweal, 20 Jan. 1894.
6. Freedom, Feb. 1892; May 1893. See also To Hell With Unionism, Chelsea leaflet. No. 2. May 1894, printed by T. Cantwell; or The Commonweal, 3 Feb. 1894.
7. Freedom, May 1893.

iations, founded on the principles of self-help, and if kept at arm's length from the social democrats, of an anti-parliamentarian bent; their real inclination was towards independent industrial struggle, and many of their leaders were advocates of direct action[1]; for all their shortcomings, "men who have experience of what it is consciously and deliberately to combine with others and work with them for a common end are a great deal fitter for a free community than men who have no practice of the sort"[2]. Given this tension between reality and potentiality, the issue at stake was whether or not to make unions a lever for anarchist aims.

Opinions expressed in Freedom, some of them perhaps under the influence of leading French anarchists who were in close touch with the group's members, seem to have been by and large in favour of working inside the unions. The S.L. seems to have been less united on the issue, though many of its members were either trade unionists themselves or organisers of unskilled labour; at this time it was considering other methods and new categories of supporters[3]. However, reports from anarchist conferences indicate that the predominant trend was in support of the policy of infiltration[4].

Within this framework, some anarchists suggested keeping "clear of trades' union disputes"[5], while others, like Turner and Wess, were in favour of such activity. Accepted almost by all was the provision that anarchists should not seek to hold office, and rather try "to induce the unions to dispense as far as possible with committees and officials"[6]. In the early 1890s, when the new unions still seemed to hold out a revolutionary promise, anarchists expressed a clear preference for propaganda inside them[7].

1. ibid., Feb. 1892.
2. ibid., May 1893.
3. See below pp. 122-25.
4. See reports of the London conference of communist-anarchists especially called to discuss the topic (Freedom, Nov. 1891); the conference of the Scottish anarchists (Freedom, Jan.-Feb. 1893); the conference on Boxing Day 1893 (The Commonweal, 6 Jan. 1894). Also Malatesta's article in Liberty, Aug. 1894 and letter from W. Hart to Perry, 6 Oct. 1896 [N.C.].
5. Mowbray in the anti-parliamentarian conference, The Commonweal, 16 Aug. 1890.
6. Conference report, ibid., 7 Nov. 1891.
7. ibid. For the deep sympathy for the new unions see Freedom, Oct. 1890.

It was also prescribed that "when there is no chance of making propaganda, start new unions on Anarchist lines"[1].

There was a wide consensus that the general strike - whether it was to be the culmination of the struggle or just one of its preludes - should be an anarchist objective[2]. Division of opinion arose over the issue of partial strikes. Reflecting the climate of communist-anarchist opinion (the individualist-anarchists relied exclusively on the removal of economic limitations to achieve sweeping economic reforms[3]) Freedom declared: "We do not hope too much from strikes. They are, as a rule, too local or too personal; too narrow in their issues to be of much lasting service, even when they succeed; and when they fail they are apt to produce despair"[4]. Yet an accepted assumption was that the strike was "a perfectible weapon", capable of leading the workers "to revolt against their taskmasters, and still on to the Universal Strike that shall put an end to the wage system itself"[5]. According to this prevailing view, only those strikes that would mark a step towards this final victory deserved to be supported[6]. Agresti, an Italian member of the Torch Group, suggested building up the revolutionary potential of a strike by stoppages, sabotage, invasion of shops, arson and the taking over of production[7]. However, others, like the moderate voices in Freedom, acquiesced in the idea of striking for the palliation of the existing system, as instead "of leading the workers to rely upon parliament for assistance, it impresses upon them that 'who would be free himself must strike the blow'"[8].

Hence, except for the taboo against amelioration of conditions by legislation, anarchist courses of action remained fluid, and were left to the discretion of the participants in the struggle. Yet on one issue they were not divided: whatever the anarchist was doing on the labour

1. ibid.
2. See the conference resolutions, ibid., 5 July 1890.
3. The Revolutionary Review, March 1889.
4. Freedom, Oct. 1893.
5. The Commonweal, 12 Oct. 1889.
6. See "An Appeal to the Miners of Great Britain", Freedom, Oct. 1893.
7. The Torch, 18 April 1895.
8. Freedom, Oct. 1889.

front, working in a union or promoting a strike, his vocation was to educate the workers in the methods and aims of anarchism, and inspire them with the universal vision of the elimination of the capitalist system, "of being their own employers, their own masters"[1]. The import of such an education must inevitably bear fruit, it was asserted. The power of the anarchist vision was irresistible. "Once this ideal is explained to them in such a fashion as they will readily understand, they will be only too eager to work for it themselves and to enrol themselves under the banner of Anarchism"[2].

The S.L. broke this pattern for a period of time. The conviction that the anarchists could capitalise on current unrest and intensify the atmosphere of sedition, combined with a growing realisation that anarchism was not sending out roots into the ranks of organised labour, precipitated a turning point in the thinking of the S.L. If until then the stress was on intellectual persuasion as the mainspring of action, priorities were now inverted and action was seen as the precursor of political awareness[3], or at least as its necessary corollary. The "period of what we may call purely educational Socialism is passing" Nicoll, the editor of The Commonweal, announced. "Education is still needed, admitted; but it is no longer the first thing"[4]. The times demanded revolutionary warfare, for him equally an educational task for he meant "to teach the people how to take their own, and finally how to hunt the landlord and capitalist out of the land"[5]. Mowbray echoed the demand for tactical change: if until then the fighting was of words, "in future this war will have to be one of deeds"[6].

In anarchist terms, action could not be other than direct action, a key concept in anarchist strategy which meant challenging the agencies of authority without recourse to constitutional measures. The S.L. now promoted this concept as the best mode of action to speed up the revolutionary

1. ibid., Feb. 1892.
2. ibid.
3. The Commonweal, 29 Nov. 1890.
4. ibid., 18 Oct. 1890.
5. ibid.,
6. ibid., 29 Nov. 1890.

process by its own members in their role as propagandists, as well as by the masses. The individual anarchist was assigned the task of "disturbance-breeder" and "rabble-rouser" to be carried out through single acts of revolt. It was now commonly heard that the aim of the anarchist must be "to stir up revolt on every possible occasion, and to bring the law and its officials into derision and contempt. Individual assaults on the system will lead to riots, riots to revolts, revolts to insurrection, insurrection to revolution"[1]. These sentiments reflected the kernel of much of concurrent anarchist propaganda elsewhere, particularly in France.

Dissatisfied with offering general guidelines alone, the Leaguers outlined specific direct action techniques, a number of which applied to the immediate grievances of the underprivileged. For many families earnings were barely adequate to cover rent and food. To ease the distress of the slum dwellers, whilst at the same time moving towards a wider non-compliance, the anarchists reverted to the solution proposed by the anarchist pioneers in the early 1880s: the No Rent Campaign. Nicoll, the most vociferous of them, foresaw the following sequence of events: widespread withholding of rent would strike at the government as people would stop paying taxes, and the government, unable to sustain the forces of law, would eventually become impotent and disappear; by then the workers would have declared a general strike and the people would take over[2]. Power, another anarchist, formulated a plan for occupying model dwellings[3].

To alleviate malnutrition and other shortages which were characteristic features of the life of the poor, some anarchists prescribed theft, believing it to be a restitution of the collective products of labour[4]. Direct action

1. ibid., 23 May 1891.
2. ibid., 18 Oct. 1890. So persistent was Nicoll that he continued to advocate the No Rent Campaign when most other anarchists had already forsaken it. See Reynolds's Newspaper, 27 June 1897. Also The Anarchist (Sheffield), 18 March 1894 and The Commonweal, 11 Sept. 1898.
3. The Commonweal, 15 Aug. 1891. Conference report.
4. Letter from Nicoll to Nettlau, 28 Nov. 1893. [N.C.]

had an application also in the field of unemployment. Finding the unemployed "a huge mass without purpose and idea", H.B. Samuels devised a plan to use this "wasteful energy" for their own benefit and that of the revolutionary cause. The unemployed, he advised, should exploit the poor laws to the full, cease to pay rent, confiscate food, live on relief instead of working and terrorise the rich[1]. All this, he promised, would make things unbearable for the authorities, which would by then have lost control.

The directives were of all manner and sorts. "An original... scheme was that the 'comrades' should invade the galleries of the large theatres, armed with bags of lice, which were to be emptied on the occupants of the parts below. Another scheme was to fumigate with sulphuretted hydrogen the carriages waiting for their rich owners outside the opera houses"[2]. Anarchists were called to "glut the police courts, libel courts, and assize courts, by making the supply of cases more than the demand"[3]. Nicoll thought it a good idea "to burn lawyers, sweaters, and rackrenters in effigy"[4].

The exhortation to agitation in full force did not stop here. A few anarchists were still not satisfied with these devices of direct action and under the impact of the intensive anarchist operations in France pressed for even bolder and more violent forms. Some recommended arson as a means of striking terror. Others pointed to the fact that "Science has placed within our reach the means to achieve our freedom" and concluded that a few determined men ready to die for the cause could "paralyse the forces of our masters" with modern weapons such as "gatlings, handgrenades, strychnine, arsenic and lead"[5]. The value of taking chemistry classes was in the same breath asserted and the use of dynamite - "man's best and last friend" was by implication and openly recommended[6]. Louise Michel opened the meeting assembled by the

1. Henry B. Samuels, What's To Be Done (London, 1892), p. 2.
2. Hart, p. 48.
3. The Commonweal, 29 Aug. 1891.
4. ibid., 6 Jan. 1891.
5. Mowbray's letter, ibid., 29 Nov. 1890.
6. See also letter from Creaghe, ibid., 28 Nov. 1891.

London anarchists a few weeks after the revelation of the Walsall plot, calling upon those present to imitate anarchist terrorists "in their courage and boldly face death in the future as they had done"[1]. Ravachol, the French anarchist and indiscriminate terrorist, was labelled "a noble figure" and "the advent of some English Ravachols" was "anxiously" anticipated[2].

Incendiary expression was, however, distasteful to the bulk of the anarchists who were extremely concerned by the repercussions of such propaganda on the progress of anarchist ideas. As if orchestrated, the whole movement was plunged into a defensive campaign in which the majority anarchist opinion about its methods was repeatedly reaffirmed in the face of a distorted, if increasingly common, conception of them.

It was very important for Freedom to make known that "we absolutely deny that we... believe or have ever published or privately stated that 'All means are fair against our present infamous society'. We doubt if there be an English Anarchist group who would make such a statement"[3]. At the same time, regarding the perpetrators of violence as victims of harsh circumstances, and the pillars of society as the real offenders, the Freedom Group felt it could not sit in judgement on those who had presumably been impelled to react to oppression with violence[4].

All the indigenous communist-anarchist organs shared this position and repeatedly insisted that education was the best method, or at least that it should precede deeds[5]. Even a foreigner like Emil Pouget - the editor of the French anarchist paper Le Père Peinard who was taking refuge in London in the mid '90s - concluded from his experience in England that outrages only undermined rather than served anarchist propaganda[6]. And if this was the prevalent mood

1. ibid., 20 Feb. 1892.
2. ibid., 2 July 1892.
3. Freedom, June 1892.
4. Charlotte Wilson, Anarchism and Outrage (London, 1893).
5. See The Torch, Nov. 1894; Liberty, Jan. 1894; and The Alarm, 26 June 1896.
6. Christian de Goustine, Pouget (Paris, 1972), p. 71. For Malatesta's views see Liberty, Sept. 1894.

in the revolutionary wing of the movement, how much more so was it in the gradualist sections which allowed no violence almost under any circumstances. Seymour refused to continue the series of lectures he was giving in the Autonomie Club in the aftermath of the Greenwich Park explosion, to avoid being held "responsible by an indiscriminating public for the tactics" which he opposed[1]. G.O. Warren went as far as changing his label from 'anarchist' to 'monist'. The Christian-anarchists joined the chorus, proclaiming that the "true anarchist looks on the deeds of dynamiters with even more intense feelings of abhorrence than those by which the ordinary citizen is inspired"[2].

Protest against the rhetoric of violence mounted in the Socialist League itself as soon as such a tendency appeared, and not only from Morris's followers but also from zealous anarchists. Kitz complained that "Comrades worked themselves into such a state of excitement that they forgot completely the principles of freedom, and, copying the tactics of reactionaries, they preached expulsion, pure and simple, from the anarchist platform "against members who did not talk about bombs and dynamite[3]. The outrages in France drew a particularly strong response, and letters in The Commonweal from leading spirits such as Burnie, Barton and Cantwell criticised too ready admiration of these events as playing "the game of the worst enemies of Free-Communism"[4].

Recourse to the terminology of bombs and explosions was thus restricted to a few comrades. By the mid '90s such language was receding. The realisation of its damaging impact, especially on the very people who needed to be won over, dawned even on those comrades who had been carried away by the revolutionary mood. Calls to emulate

1. Morning Leader, 22 Feb. 1894.
2. Morrison Davidson, Let There Be Light!, p. 74. See also Davidson in Reynolds's Newspaper, 15 April 1900; 15 Sept. 1901.
3. The Commonweal 26 Dec. 1891. See also ibid., 12 Dec. 1891.
4. Ibid., 23 July 1892. See also ibid., 9 July 1892, and the pamphlet Revolutionary Studies published by The Commonweal in 1892 in which terror against the bourgeoisie was said to be "senseless".

people like Ravachol disappeared almost totally. References to violence became more and more infrequent, ambiguous and hesitant. Moreover, this realisation had a moderating effect on the tactical thinking of the League as a whole. Less bloody, yet nonetheless boisterous, prescriptions were mitigated and even support for violence committed outside Britain became more circumspect[1]. Instead, anarchist reliance on peaceful propaganda as opposed to violent agitation was highlighted[2].

The year 1895 found the movement etiolated and almost isolated. The next decade was spent less in a careful search for routes and more in the sheer effort to survive. The lesson learnt even if subconsciously from years of propaganda was that the road leading to an anarchist society would be a long and difficult one, an awareness which gave rise to the growth of religious and spiritual trends which accentuated inner change and at the same time prompted the redefinition of some immediate purposes. This was demonstrated in the attempts to pioneer the social revolution by experimenting with communal life styles, a tendency which embodied the conviction that man could attain complete self-reliance through his own immediate efforts while simultaneously sowing the seeds of change. At its basis lay a gradualist view of progress which conceived the new order as arising slowly out of the present, rather than following upon the breakdown of capitalism.

The incursion of anarchist principles into the labour movement in France and in the U.S.A. and the upsurge of industrial action at home in the years leading up to the First World War brought the focus back to the industrial front and to the debates of the early 1890s. Counting on the industrial complex to supply the manpower for the final upheaval, a growing number of anarchists, sometimes known as anarcho-syndicalists, threw their weight behind an all-absorbing participation in the workers' economic struggles, hoping thereby as in the '90s to "inspire the toilers with a

1, The Commonweal, 23 Dec. 1893.
2. Ibid.

far higher conception of life, with all its possibilities"[1], and steer them completely away from the parliamentary road towards direct action and ultimately towards the expropriatory general strike. By their insistence on collective efforts, these advocates reinforced the path of the anarchist movement away from individual direct action towards a more collective and organised confrontation with the forces of capitalism.

Under the respective inspiration of French syndicalism and American industrial unionism, the choice was between reorganising the existing trade unions on a fighting basis or the formation of new associations with the aim of creating one big union[2]. Whether advocating the former or the latter, whether allowing the worker to fight for better working conditions[3], or enjoining him to resort to economic terrorism and "Be fire with fire, and robber of the robber! ... and if needs be, meet bullet with bullet"[4], the anarchists who ascribed to labour associations a key role in begetting the new society essentially trusted in the power of education as the motive force leading to revolution.

The communist-anarchist sections remained loyal to their original position. To them, anarchism was much wider and more progressive in its concerns than simply a preoccupation with the industrial world. The importance of the syndicalist message was acknowledged, but trade unionism was "insufficient in itself to manage the Revolution and open the new era of liberty"[5]. Malatesta represented the attitude of the communist-anarchists to anarcho-syndicalism at the Amsterdam Congress when he contended that the "purely economic struggle is not sufficient; it must be based on an intense moral struggle; for changes in economic conditions soon readjusted themselves where the moral

1. The Anarchist (Glasgow), 3 May 1912.
2. For the attitude of some anarchists to syndicalism and industrial unionism see Freedom April and March 1912 respectively.
3. John Turner in The Voice of Labour, 25 Jan. 1907. Also Anarchy and the Labour War (London, n.d.).
4. Guy Aldred in The Voice of Labour, 11 May 1907.
5. Freedom, Sept. 1907.

conditions of the people remained unaffected"[1]. Freedom continued to appeal to a wider spectrum of potential converts, and advocated more variegated methods of action than those "forced upon the working classes by capitalism"[2]. Those more inclined to support the individualist tendency in anarchism, like Nettlau, attacked syndicalism for not attaching enough significance to the quest for freedom[3], and claimed that it could even be "the graveyard of anarchism"[4].

Overtones of mistrust of collective and organised warfare persisted in the ranks[5]. It was still pointed out that the individual "himself is directly responsible for the existence of government and all the prevailing social evils", and suggested that by ceasing to participate in events organised by the state "he is helping to break the spell of hypnotism" of authority[6]. What was important to those libertarians above all was to keep alive the spirit of revolt and not to be bound by any one solution. The most common assumption was that the anarchist mission would best be fulfilled by instilling revolutionary ideas. After all, "knowledge is far more important than the form of organisation", the readers of Freedom were reminded[7]. Enlightened workers could also act without an organisational framework, but without knowledge they were "helpless and hopeless". The veteran champion J. Lane indeed pointed to the common characteristic that united the separate functions of communist-anarchism and syndicalism: "while Freedom groups and the pure anarchists are doing good work as Educationalists the syndicalists will do good work among the trade unions in the same direction without frightening them with that terrible word Anarchy"[8].

By opting out of the body politic, the anarchists

1. Ibid., Nov. 1907.
2. Ibid., Jan. 1909.
3. Letter from Nettlau to Keell, 4 June 1906. [N.C.]
4. Letter from Nettlau to Keell, 9 May 1914. [N.C.]
5. For apprehensions about the potential corrupting influence of the industrial struggle on the participants see letter from Nettlau to Keell, 18 March 1911. [N.C.]
6. Freedom, Oct. 1908.
7. Ibid., March 1912.
8. Letter from Lane to Barker, 17 Dec. 1912. [N.C.]

ruled out a wide spectrum of readily available ways and means. Yet over and above this deliberate limitation, they met difficulties in translating their ideas into policies and workable programmes, whether as a result of inherent contradictions, or perhaps through deficiencies in indigenous thinking. In other words, they failed to provide an alternative set of goals with which the underprivileged could identify and for which they would act. There was no coherent and detailed plan of progression towards the new society, while the role of spontaneity and personal initiative in kindling a revolution was overestimated. What most anarchists advocated was hard to follow, especially for those in urgent need of alleviation of their predicament. With no prospect of immediate gains, the latter could not but wait for their fellow-labourers to absorb the anarchist message and only then set to work on the reorganisation of society. Adding to the ambiguity were disagreements about tactics and often contradictory statements, which emerged even from the propagandists of the same current of thought.

Further, if the diffusion of routine propaganda by the spoken and written word was almost self-evident, direct action - a concept that was constantly posed as the ideal method - called for clarification. Yet many recommendations concerning defiant action, especially the non-industrial varieties, were either too abstract and vague, or inapplicable to the issues needing urgent solution. Of the concrete suggestions, made notably by the S.L., a large proportion were guaranteed to result in a prison sentence and thus were inappropriate for more than the very few. In any event, these suggestions were couched in such violent rhetoric that they alienated, rather than attracted, the masses.

The anarcho-syndicalists and their predecessors in the '90s corrected some of the deficiencies: the set of ideas they held furnished a sense of purpose, a framework for action and the means of spreading anarchist propaganda. Yet the advocates of anarcho-syndicalism had to labour under the handicap of competing with other anti-political

strands which did not scruple to support the struggle for bread.

The contribution of anarchism in the sphere of tactics was thus to be found in the promotion of rebellion and in the insistence on grass-roots activity. Though the full range of possible direct extra-parliamentary action was not yet appreciated, the anarchists paved the way for tactics that in the mid-20th century would become the stock-in-trade of protest movements and individuals engaged in civil disobedience.

Activity

If the theory of action of British anarchism contained a menacing kernel which constituted a departure from widely approved methods of political behaviour in Britain, this hardly manifested itself in practice. The character of domestic agitation was in no sense different from that of other historic or contemporary radical parties. In fact it was on the whole even more restrained than movements like the suffragettes'. Though the anarchists opted for a course of action outside the legal system and their objectives were to be attained only by a wholesale transformation of the social fabric, the British variety overwhelmingly adhered to law-abiding tactics. Even the revolutionary strands of anarchism which challenged the masses to a fierce and open struggle against the authorities provided few concrete examples of how to pursue it.

Violence, to the extent that it was an issue within the movement, was one for theorizing over rather than implementing. Anarchists delivered vitriolic attacks on the causes of oppression, pleaded for heroic postures and spoke in an apocalyptic vein about extravagant acts of revolt. Yet in thus acting out their anger, the anarchists caused no physical harm. Partisans preached uncompromising revolutionary aims but through moderate means of propaganda, waiting, as they were, for the masses to take the future in their own hands. Their high-flown talk appears to have been more a matter of registering a protest, a demonstration of

defiant bravado, than of clear and calculated intent. Even then, recourse to the vernacular of brute force was only an episode in the life of British anarchism in the first part of the 1890s.

Correspondingly, the more conspicuously aggressive and intimidating action took place mostly in the same period. A proportion of the foreign anarchists always busied themselves with studying explosive devices and in plotting acts of terror to be executed outside Britain. In the early and mid '90s a few of them went to the length of contemplating terrorist acts inside the country; the most well-known case, other than the dubious Greenwich explosion, being that of the two Italians, Giuseppe Farnara and Francis Polti who in 1894 were sentenced to twenty and ten years respectively for unlawfully obtaining and possessing explosives to blow up the Stock Exchange and the Houses of Parliament. But in this militant phase, several of the English members, too, toyed with the idea of helping the revolution along through the employment of physical means.

The Walsall group experimented with bomb manufacturing - though with the intention of exporting the products abroad - and chemistry classes were started for interested partisans. Significantly, Coulon, a French agent provocateur, was behind most of these projects. In 1894 contemplation gave way to action: a series of letter-box explosions throughout London were later traced to Rolla Richards of the Deptford anarchist group; and there were a few other allegedly anarchist incidents involving dynamite in the next few years. Otherwise, there were no spectacular anarchist crimes in Britain. Discontent manifested itself only rarely in violent action, and as far as is known, never through collective undertakings. Whatever was contemplated, violence proved to be the exception rather than the rule. Crimes attributed to anarchists, especially from the late 1890s onwards, were almost always of a non-political nature, and in any case usually originated in the foreign colony. The only anarchist operation to have caused loss of human life in Britain was the accidental

explosion in Greenwich Park and the victim may well have been a police spy.

In the England of these years overt anarchist aggression was directed against property and not people. The encouragement of single acts of revolt led to a few symbolic attacks on material objects representing the cause of anarchist frustration. In one such incident, Christopher Charles Davis smashed a jeweller's shop window in Birmingham with a brick wrapped in copies of anarchist leaflets and The Walsall Anarchist, and then threw some rings into the street. Davis, who was unemployed and lived off the kindness of other comrades, meant to advertise his plight with this dramatic act and "give other people a chance of taking them [the rings]"[1]. Then he waited proudly for the police. In the magistrates' court he explained the cause of his action and shouted "Hurrah for Anarchy", a cry which "was echoed by two young men in the rear of the court, who were promptly arrested and charged with disturbing the proceedings, but dismissed with a caution". His step was followed, according to Freedom, by an "epidemic of window smashing"[2]. Later that year another anarchist, Henry Conway, repeated the performance in London, and also took 26 diamond rings. "When arrested he said he had done it for the common good. One-third of the proceeds was to go to... Nicol [sic] who was... about to be liberated, one third to himself, and one-third to the unemployed"[3]. In another case, demonstrating his contempt for private property, Ted Leggatt, a devoted practitioner of anarchist methods, tried to steal a pail of sand[4].

By and large, the little civil disobedience that was practised took the form of protest. The most popular were the incidents in which anarchists or people who responded to anarchist propaganda refused to pay rent[5]. Leggatt carried on a solitary campaign against the railway company by travelling in a second class carriage instead of standing

1. The Times, 28 Jan. 1893.
2. Freedom, March 1893.
3. The Daily Chronicle, 26 Oct. 1893.
4. Liberty, May 1896.
5. For Creaghe's campaigns see The Commonweal, 4/11 July 1901 and subsequent issues; for Seymour's see The Revolutionary Review, 6 June 1889 and onwards.

in a third[1]. Barker of Brighton demonstrated an act of non-co-operation with the system when he refused to answer the questions of government officials in the census paper[2]. When prosecuted, he availed himself of the opportunity to advance anarchist propaganda. Among the only incidents known to have involved any kind of passive resistance by individual anarchists were Seymour's own No Rent campaign in 1889 and Robert Harding's chaining himself to the railings in Trafalgar Square a year earlier to assert the right of public meetings[3].

The impulse to resort to non-compliance on non-industrial issues that flared up with the social ferment of the early '90s was of a transient character and died away almost completely with the collapse of the S.L. For a decade the persistent references to direct action in anarchist propaganda suggested an underlying continuity in rhetoric more than in action. Overt defiance in the next active period of the movement, before the War, was restricted to the industrial arena and to collective action and was, in any event, only rarely practised specifically by anarchists. From the mid 1890s the movement reverted to a more moderate yet typical form of activity: intellectualising the pervasive malaise and then expecting its force of argument to shape political consciousness and breed more disaffection among the masses, so as to build up that measure of solidarity necessary to effect a complete break with the past. Indeed, not only in its theory of tactics, but also in practice, the movement was educational. Dispensing with political lobbying for election of whatever kind on the one hand, and with direct challenge to the authorities on the other, the anarchists were left with the work of disseminating ideas. Contemporary observers testified to this effect when referring to British anarchism as "anarchie de salon"[4], or as "merely a kind of Exchange or market-place for anarchist ideas, motive forces and the literature of agitation"[5].

1. Liberty, Sept. 1895.
2. The Commonweal, 23 May 1891.
3. Freedom, Feb. 1888.
4. Letter from Kropotkin to Herzig, 23 May 1904 in Miller, Kropotkin, p. 169.
5. E.V. Zenker, Anarchism (London, 1898), p. 243.

A most absorbing dimension of activity was verbal propaganda. Whether in their own meeting places, in rented halls, the backrooms of pubs, coffee houses, working men's clubs or through the hospitality of socialist and sometimes radical groups, anarchists delivered lectures and conducted discussions. They also spoke on street corners, in parks and at open-air rallies and held, or participated in, demonstrations, marches and processions. "Our propaganda was never ending" Paton recorded. "Neither rain, snow nor frost kept us from the streets"[1]. The less mass-oriented champions - the individualist-anarchists and the Tolstoyans - were content with small indoor activities and seldom addressed outdoor meetings. In the years of peak activity, platforms of communist-anarchists and later anarcho-syndicalists too, sometimes drew crowds of thousands, some who were genuinely interested, others who came to obstruct or just to be entertained.

Oratorical appeal apart, the movement relied on the writing and printing skills of its members to promote anarchist viewpoints. In fact, literary propaganda was the focus of activity of anarchist groups and individuals at all levels. The result was a wealth of newspapers, pamphlets, tracts, manifestoes, leaflets, handbills, placards and cartoons, all issued by a small and disparate number of unremitting propagandists.

Highest priority was given to the publication of newspapers. A considerable number of anarchist papers of various standpoints and formats - many of them of an ephemeral nature - flickered briefly into life only to expire soon after. Compared with Robert Blatchford's popular socialist organ The Clarion with a circulation of 70,000 at its peak in 1906, and the I.L.P.'s The Labour Leader with 40,000 to 50,000 in 1911, the circulation figures of anarchist papers are not very impressive[2]. Still, in conjunction, they were read by a significant number of people. Freedom, the most stable paper, sustained a circulation of 3,000 in its good

1. Paton, Proletarian Pilgrimage, p. 220.
2. The circulation figures of these two papers are taken from R.J. Holton, "Daily Herald v. Daily Citizen, 1912-15", International Review of Social History, vol. 19 (1974), p. 348. n. 3.

days, declining to 500 during and after the Boer War, but in 1907 the circulation increased again to 1,500 and in 1911 to 3,000[1]. In its first few years, The Commonweal - with William Morris as editor - had an average circulation of 3,500, but steadily lost readers[2]. The Voice of Labour (1907) had a circulation of 2,000[3]. Seymour's The Anarchist sold close to 1,500 issues[4]. The New Order sold around 500 issues a month[5]. The Jewish Anarchist papers had a much wider readership in proportion to their potential Yiddish reading public. The Arbeter Fraint had an average circulation of 2,500 and Germinal of 4,000[6].

Of the other forms of propaganda literature, if in 1887 Lane's Anti-Statist Manifesto was almost the only pamphlet to present the anarchist case, by December 1900 Freedom was reported to have produced more than 80,000 of the series Freedom Pamphlets[7]. The output of its pamphlets and books increased from 4,000 and 300 respectively in 1904, to 15,000 and 1,100 in 1910[8]. Between 1910 and 1913 200,000 leaflets were printed and distributed. Kropotkin was, of course, the major contributor. The dozen or so involved in the Arbeter Fraint group produced almost half a million books and pamphlets of anarchist, communist, socialist and free thought literature in the time it was in existence[9]. Some of them consisted of hundreds of pages. "A very great quantity of Russian and Yiddish literature was smuggled from London into Russia to help the comrades there at their ceaseless task[10]. The S.L. handed out scores of thousands of leaflets[11]. Some anarchists - like Seymour, Tochatti and Aldred - had their own publishing houses where anarchist literature, translated or original - including their own writings - was printed in pamphlet form, and reached quite a wide readership. Aldred's

1. See Freedom, Oct. 1893; Oct. 1907; Dec. 1911.
2. [S.L. Archives.]
3. Freedom, Oct. 1907.
4. The Anarchist, March 1887.
5. The New Order, Dec. 1899.
6. Freedom, Oct. 1907.
7. ibid., Dec. 1900.
8. ibid., April 1912.
9. Aldred, No Traitor's Gait! p. 309.
10. Ishill, p. 80.
11. [S.L. Archives.]

The Logic and Economics of the Class Struggle[1], for instance, was sold by the thousand.

The individualist-anarchists used literature as their main organ of propaganda. The output of the Tolstoyans was prolific, as many of those who were intrigued by Tolstoy's political and ethical thinking also had publishing facilities, and were thus instrumental in its diffusion together with books by Morrison, Carpenter, Henry Salt, and people who were either Tolstoy's pupils or preoccupied with similar subjects. Tolstoy's abandonment of the legal rights to his books enabled those so inclined to make what use they pleased of them. Foreign anarchists, too, involved themselves heavily in publishing propaganda material. Some of it left "the English capital wrapped in an inoffensive newspaper or concealed between the pages of a book or magazine designedly chosen for the harmlessness of its contents"[2].

The production of literature consumed much physical and mental energy, especially where financial resources were scarce. The Freedom Press used "a large old-fashioned printing press, which was turned by hand. This was very exhausting work, and would knock an ordinary man out of breath in about ten minutes or so"[3]. Therefore "two or three of the men alternated in turning the crank"[4]. Turner revealed to his readers that most of his "hasty scribbling for the Voice of Labour has been done in the early hours, after getting home from meetings past midnight"[5]. Most editors had no alternative but to do the setting themselves. In order to disseminate the message of anarchism contained in this literature, anarchists throughout the country sold or distributed it gratis at gatherings, in the street or via newsagents.

Considering that the workers' emancipation meant for most anarchists the redemption of the whole of society, it was only natural for many to feel that in the industrial

1. Guy A. Aldred, The Logic and Economics of the Class Struggle (London, 1908), p. 1. Part of the series Pamphlets for the Proletarian (no. 1).
2. Félix Dubois, The Anarchist Peril (London, 1894), p. 66.
3. Hart, p. 157.
4. Freedom, Sept. 1921. Kelly's reminiscences of Freedom.
5. The Voice of Labour, 29 June 1907.

world they trod on promising terrain. Indeed, at those times when a sharp break with the capitalist system looked possible, some anarchists manifested concentrated action in the world of labour of all the kinds advocated within their ranks.

From the late '80s onwards they became gradually more aware of the importance of their trade union affiliation. The Commonweal published a list of some anarchist trade unionists[1]. From Great Yarmouth the anarchist group reported: "Acting upon the suggestions of the Conference... several of our comrades have joined the local Trade Unions"[2]. Turner was the organiser of the Shop Assistants' Union and Tochatti was its organising secretary. Gertrude Schack was active in the Executive of the Women's Union. Several individuals supported moves to organise the unskilled or non-unionised workers. Edith Lupton tried in 1890 to inspire the laundry women to form a co-operative[3]. Turner and Kitz were in the provisional Council of the Federation of the Co-Operative Societies.

Occasionally, strikes were supported by collections of money and distribution of food to the strikers and their dependents[4]. In one case, the activity of an anarchist in the cab drivers' strike resulted in 1896 in the fleeting existence of a communist-anarchist group of taxi drivers[5]. A number of anarchists from and in the tradition of the S.L. organised meetings and processions of the unemployed or on their behalf. Mowbray in Norwich of the late '80s stood out among them. Other anarchists helped to boycott employers and participated in episodes of violent conflict with them and with the police.

This phase - roughly between 1888 and 1896 - was followed by a quiet period. Yet between 1907 and 1914, anarchists plunged even more resolutely into labour struggles. Some, like Turner in the Shop Assistants' Union and Leggatt in the London Carmen's Union, made efforts to steer their

1. The Commonweal, 6 June 1891.
2. Freedom, March 1892.
3. The Commonweal criticized the enterprise because of the 5 % interest agreed to be paid on the shares (1 Nov. 1890).
4. See for instance The Commonweal, 7 Sept. 1889.
5. The anarchists had already been active in the cab-drivers' strike in 1894. See Freedom, June 1894; Nov. 1896.

union policies. Others, like Aldred, Mowbray and the German Charles Lahr, tried to set up new unions. Before the War, anarchists were active in the mining industry. They also made common cause with the Gasworkers and General Labourers Union, which overcame its fear of speaking from anarchist platforms. The Liverpool anarchist groups made extensive inroads into the industrial forces in Merseyside[1]. A few years earlier anarchists had a hand in the demonstrations by the unemployed in Leeds and in Newcastle where they had the local unemployed "marching the city with conspicuous banners, interviewing Councillors, etc., for work"[2].

Yet only a few of those who took part in these ventures engrossed themselves in trade union activity on Turner's and Leggatt's level of preoccupation, or became directly involved in the mechanics of a strike action. Most of them resorted to the one safe activity of preaching to their fellow-workers, strikers or unemployed to refrain from reliance on the parliamentary machine and on partial gains, and to rely on their own direct force[3]. The literature they distributed sounded the same message[4].

In their multi-directional exertions to spread the word and spur all disadvantaged groups into greater militancy, the anarchists were also breaking largely virgin soil. In the early 1890s, women anarchists - Gertrude Schack, Edith Lupton and Mrs. Lahr - appealed to the interests of their own kind. They called for demonstrations in protest against police treatment of women's meetings, and handed out leaflets - "What Use is the Vote" and "An Appeal to Women" - which were specifically for the working woman. The attention of women was drawn to the conditions in which they lived as "slaves of slaves", and they were urged to support their husbands' industrial struggles[5].

1. R.J. Holton, "Syndicalism and Labour on Merseyside 1906-14" in H. Hikins, ed., Building the Union (Liverpool, 1973), p. 128.
2. Freedom, Jan. 1908.
3. For an example of an anarchist speech to strikers see Kitz's address to the Dock strikers in Southampton, The Commonweal, 20 Sept. 1980. See also the "Anarchist Manifesto to the Miners", The Commonweal, 16 Sept. 1893.
4. For a few examples see the two leaflets published by The Commonweal Group for the First of May meeting in 1894: "An Anarchist Address to Workingmen", and "Down With the Politician".
5. "An Appeal to Women" (1893-94).

After the desertion from the army of Mowbray's son on ideological grounds, a few Socialist Leaguers attempted to spread disaffection in the army by reminding the soldiers of their class origin and true interests. Their main aim was to persuade the soldiers through conversations and leaflets not to shoot at strikers and instead take the side of labour[1]. The S.L. was to continue with such written propaganda almost until its disintegration[2].

Encouragement to revolt was meant to extend to the "thieves, the paupers and the prostitutes"[3], to "poachers and burglars"[4]. The group in Sheffield issued a manifesto to the criminals saying: "We are desirous to do all that you do, in order to show our contempt and hate of the present condition of things, and because we believe that you criminals are really benefactors of Humanity, while those who sit in judgement on you are the real malefactors"[5].

The educational mission of the anarchists extended to the supporters themselves. There were groups and individuals for whom the establishment of a library composed of books on socialism, anarchism, and other subjects on the social question, was a first priority[6]. As was noted earlier, besides the usual lectures and debates, there were adult classes and Sunday schools for children. Aldred even started an elocution class for propagandists.

But the story of anarchism in Britain is not merely one of propaganda efforts. There were anarchists who were determined to wait no longer for the realisation of a new social order, and undertook to build anarchist societies in miniature. Such a step was, if unwittingly, a new means of expressing protest without provoking a strong adverse reaction as well as another method to advertise the cause.

One way of practising what they preached was by the establishment of agricultural communities of the kind which embodied the dawn of the anti-capitalist culture and the

1. See the handbill "An Address to The Army" (Dec. 1891 - Jan. 1892).
2. See the handbill "An Appeal to The Soldiers" (1894).
3. Conference report in The Commonweal, 16 Aug. 1890.
4. ibid., 29 Aug. 1891.
5. For its content, ibid., April 1891.
6. This was true of the group in Newcastle in 1907, and of Aldred's exertions in the same year.

inauguration of an intensive and free state of being. Proximity to nature, and the values of rural life where man lived by the sweat of his brow, held a great promise of affecting human nature and guaranteed material security. Based on shared work and common enjoyment of the community's products, while still preserving individuality, the new social system was to constitute a truly libertarian community.

Not all the people who lent themselves to these ventures were confirmed anarchists, yet they were largely guided by the ideas of Tolstoy and Kropotkin, and by the favourable attitude towards a communal way of life implicit in anarchist philosophy. Carpenter's writings and Morris's News From Nowhere - in which a blueprint of a decentralised, communist and libertarian order was provided - were other seminal influences.

The first specifically anarchist community was the one established in 1895 at Clousden Hill Farm, Forest Hall, near Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The founders had a few objectives: first, to demonstrate that intensive agriculture as recommended by Kropotkin was superior to ordinary cultivation and that it could succeed with a group of workers with little capital; second, in their internal life to be an example for anarchist-communism, and third, in their external life to show economic relationships close to communism[1]. With the financial assistance of a wealthy London anarchist, some comrades took a lease on the farm for 20 years, paying an annual rent of £60, and with £100 they purchased agricultural stock and implements[2]. "A portion of the land they covered with glass, and organised a poultry and dairy farm, besides vegetable gardens and orchards, the produce from which they despatched weekly to the local co-operative store and the Newcastle market"[3].

Following the communist-anarchist ideal, everyone worked according to his capacity and received according to need. There were no salaries, only pocket-money was given.

1. Freedom, Aug. 1897.
2. Liberty, Feb. 1896.
3. Hart, p. 77. For a more detailed report see Freedom, Oct. 1896.

The individual enjoyed complete freedom to choose both his work and his sexual partners. The members lived communally and ate together. Community affairs were conducted in weekly meetings. The membership comprised fifteen men, two women and four children of different nationalities. Some of the pioneers were residents of the area. Otherwise, it was an international crowd. There were people from Britain, Switzerland, Denmark, Germany, Belgium and Czechoslovakia[1].

A partial observer related its demise: "The colony prospered for a while, but... differences began to show themselves"[2]; gradually the membership decreased to twelve yet still divided into two factions. "The colony came to grief in a tangle of quarrelling. Two of the colonists bought their colleagues out, and started a flower business on their own account. This turned out a failure and the affairs of the concern came before the Newcastle Bankruptcy Court in April, 1902".

In 1896 another anarchist colony, inspired directly by Tolstoy's teachings, was formed in Purleigh, Essex by three members of Kenworthy's Croydon Brotherhood Church[3]. In the course of the first eighteen months the three original members were joined by "a boat builder and carpenter, an auctioneer, a tailor, a professor of Chemistry, an engineer, two bank clerks, a Russian... and a practical Gardener and his wife, daughter and three sons"[4]. Twelve others were scattered about the district and helped "in various ways -

1. One of them was the Czech tailor Kapper, who had built the place in 1893. The fame of the colony extended to far away places. The Czech philosopher Francis Sedlâk was prevented from commiting suicide by two things: "one, the coming across a book by Max Stirner... and the other being the accidental finding of a small scrap of newspaper, wherein he read of Clousden Hill Farm". (Nellie Shaw, A Czech Philosopher on the Cotswolds (London, 1940), p. 27.). Instead he walked all the way from Czechoslovakia to Newcastle whereupon he discovered that the colony had turned into a private enterprise. From there he moved to Purleigh and then to Whiteway.
2. Hart, p. 79.
3. Kenworthy himself moved around between the various experiments in Tolstoyan living. In the summer of 1898 a few members formed themselves into a 'Co-Operative Building Association' in order to build a wooden house for him in Purleigh in their spare time. Upon completion, Kenworthy moved in.
4. The New Order, April 1898. They were also joined by a few Russian Doukhobors who shared their ideals.

manual work on the colony, monetary help, and the encouragement and sympathy of people with the same view of life"[1]. The professed ideal of Purleigh was "to live lives worthy of men; to endeavour more and more to develop tolerance and unselfishness, and to work earnestly for a time when we can welcome all who care to come"[2].

On a 23 acre site, a house and greenhouses were built, an apple orchard planted, a market garden laid out and stock-breeding undertaken. At the end of 1898 Kenworthy moved his printing press to Purleigh, so the colony was also used for the dissemination of Tolstoy's writings. The evenings were spent in cultural activities: tea, music, dancing and the entertainment of the ever-increasing visitors. They had reading and discussion meetings, gymnastic courses and drill classes for the younger members. The business of the farm was conducted at weekly meetings. Nothing was undertaken "unless all the colonists are unanimous in desiring it". There was "no fixed form of proceeding" and anyone who cared to come was welcomed to these meetings. There were no rules; each was "left to do as he or she likes"[3]. They lived together, and, loyal to their humanitarian principles, ate vegetarian food.

However, a report from Purleigh, published in April 1898 in The New Order, revealed that all was not well. Firstly, it was admitted that the colony was near the end of its resources, and secondly, that the members were "dissatisfied with our actual achievements, and fall very far short of our ideal in all ways". The bone of contention which brought about its disintegration was the question of the exclusion or non-exclusion of certain individuals. "Some wished to run the colony mainly on economic lines and only accept as members those who would be servideable to the community". Others wishes "to develop a right relation between man and man... to get out of the commercial system altogether" and therefore believed in the policy of the 'Open Door'. The non-exclusionists seceded after two years

1. ibid.
2. ibid.
3. ibid.

and made a fresh start in the Cotswolds, where they intended to "work in the highest interests of humanity on a less selfish basis"[1]. The few residual members held out until 1900. The health authorities signed the venture's death warrant when it was joined by a few Lancashire paupers with smallpox[2].

In nearby Wickford, 'a colony for city man' was founded in 1898 by members of the Tolstoyan Society in London. However.idealistic their plans for the future of the community, it developed into nothing more than a suburban village for people working in London. At first its members visited the place and worked there at weekends or in their leisure time. Later some of them actually moved to live on the site.

The new Tolstoyan settlement in Whiteway, Gloucestershire which began in October 1898 consisted of 41 acres purchased for the members by Samuel Veale Bracher. Bracher himself used to visit and then spent a few months in Purleigh in order to acquire "practical knowledge of the principles professed and carried out there"[3].

> "The members had to comply with legal requirements and enter their names as legal owners, whereupon the title deed was burned as a token that the land was not held as private property and that the only valid title was use"[4].

The colony started with eight people and grew to 40. In 1899 most of the settlers were English. Beside Sedlâk, the Czech, they comprised an Oxford tutor of Greek, the son of a wealthy Birmingham manufacturer, an ex-science lecturer, a sailor with a tent, a tubercular compositor, a farmer who had lost his land, an ex-Congregational minister, a trained boxer, a few Quakers, artisans, journalists, medical students and clerks. Among them were several women.

The farm was divided up and areas allocated to fruit, vegetables and livestock. As in Purleigh, life was simple. The colonists dressed plainly, men and women wearing san-

1. ibid., Aug. 1899.
2. A few cases of insanity were also discovered in Purleigh. Kenworthy himself ended up in an asylum.
3. ibid.
4. One of the suggested ways of avoiding a legal signature was that the land should be re-conveyed to the Real and Eternal Owner.

dals. They dispensed with money and carried on exchange by barter. Nellie Shaw, one of the settlers, recounted how acting

> "under the influence of the idea that it was immoral to use money... and in consequence not using stamps - money in another form - Francis [Sedlâk] later attempted to walk to London in mid-winter, so as to deliver the second part of his MS"[1].

They, too,

> "had no rules of any kind, and everyone did as he or she liked. To become a colonist no application was needed; all that anyone had to do was to take a seat at the common table. All things were supposed to be held in common... and all the money they possessed was kept in a small open box upon the mantel shelf"[2].

"The result was", a contemporary related, "that whilst some of the colonists worked hard, the majority sponged idly upon their labours"[3]. Tramps and passers-by turned up and enjoyed the food and the facilities without contributing their share. Moreover, the license of sexual relationships and the propagation of free love ideas by a few settlers began to annoy the less liberated members, "Until in disgust, Bracher, the founder, his wife and others, left the colony"[4]. Further friction and Bracher's public dissociation from the group only worsened the poor publicity the place suffered and led to defections. Life in the colony was again disturbed when a neighbouring farmer dug up their potatoes; their fruit crop was stolen and Bracher sold the cows.

After two years of communal living the remaining anarchists came to the conclusion that

> "Free, harmonious communism is possible only among people who have the utmost consideration for each other, and who are ready at all times to be as

1. Shaw, A Czech, p. 64. For her reminiscences see her Whiteway (London, 1935).
2. Hart, p. 80. For impressions of a visit to the colony see Thomas W. Allen in Reynolds's Newspaper, 23 Oct. 1904.
3. Hart, p. 80.
4. "So disgusted were some of the colonists that they renounced Anarchy straightaway, and on an adjoining farm started a co-operative colony based on laws and authority, the chief law being 'He that will not work, neither shall he eat!. Hart, p. 81. Bracher tried to reclaim the land but found it legally impossible. The venture left him penniless.

> exacting with themselves as any employer could possibly be... It seems to be a law of human progress that pressure is inevitably put on from without till such time as people put it on from within themselves"[1].

Deciding that "individual initiative and responsibility does not necessarily mean a lack of unity", the land was divided into plots to be cultivated separately by the members who were to co-operate when need arose. The inhabitants who did not agree with the new arrangement gradually drifted away. Newcomers arrived in their place. More buildings, including a bakery, were erected and handloom weaving was started; the land and production improved and friction decreased. With the profit they acquired a few luxurious objects which they themselves could not afford to produce, like books and a piano.

There were other experimental settlements in which anarchists participated, but all except Whiteway withered away. The latter was to remain in existence until the 1930s.

Another demonstration of a new form of social existence was the introduction of communal urban co-operatives in production, in which goods and labour constituted the price of products. Through them the anarchists set further examples of a possible anarchist way of life within a non-anarchist social structure, without waiting for parliamentary reforms or for the conversion of all the people to socialism. By then the Co-operative movement had developed mainly towards co-operation in consumption and set itself limited and immediate aims of improving the conditions of life of its own members through material gains; basically, it accepted the capitalist economic structure. Against this background, anarchists felt the need to resurrect the original revolutionary intentions of Robert Owen and make the co-operatives the power base for a moral and egalitarian communal society. This design seemed sure to bring about a peaceful revolution while at the same time embodying an aim which would not be too daunting for the ordinary person. Here, too, Tolstoy was a seminal force, most of the co-operatives actually arising out of Tolstoyan circles. Under his inspiration, love and brotherhood were to replace present crude economic relationships in a true Christian spirit.

1. Whiteway, Near Stroud (n.p. 1908).

The first such scheme had been thought out in detail by Bruce Wallace at the weekly Social Questions Conference conducted at his Brotherhood Church in Southgate Road, London, from 1892. Kenworthy was invited to join. On 19 January 1894 the Brotherhood Trust was launched with the grandiose aim of organising within four years a million altruists into "'a voluntary Co-operative Commonwealth'" to shame the capitalist system "to decay"[1]. "Organized in groups of ten, each under an elected decanus, each member was to co-opt out of separate profit-making business or industry and give custom and service to the organizing of 'fraternal industry and commerce'... Fvery ten deans were to meet together to elect a centurion, and every ten centurions were to elect a chiliarch"[2], until it became a universal federation of fraternity, mutualism and true democracy, combining the advantages of city and country life.

The immediate problem facing them was how to attract capital without the promise of interest. Halliday Sparling (for a while Morris's son-in-law) suggested substituting the incentive of immediate profit with that of a safeguarded future and with the vision of a juster and happier social order. The net profits would be held by the trustees (Wallace and Kenworthy) and used to enlarge the project, improve the state of the productive workers, provide old age pensions, sickness and accident benefits, and save for the purchase of land for communities and the acquisition of scientific means of production. It was believed that under ordinarily decent management and without the cost of advertisement and maintenance of 'privileged idlers', "there will be a surplus over cost of production and the workers' living wage; as, through the rolling up of more and more free capital out of that surplus and through the extension of the organisation, interest and rent are further cast out of the workers' life conditions, [and] there will be a larger and larger surplus"[3]. In time the customers would also find it desirable to organise themselves in co-operative farms, workshops and factories.

1. W.H.G. Armytage, Heavens Below (London, 1961), p. 344.
2. ibid., p. 345.
3. Bruce Wallace, Towards Fraternal Organisation (London, n.d.), p. 13.

To implement the project the promoters opened a grocery and vegetable co-operative in North London.

Other explorations of co-operative practices followed. Members of Kenworthy's Brotherhood Church in Croydon opened the Croydon Brotherhood Store selling mainly health foods (some of the fresh products came from Purleigh); a bookshop and stationers; the Brotherhood House to provide accommodation for the needy and the Croydon Brotherhood Dressmakers' Co-operative which was kept alive from November 1895 to the summer of 1899 by Nellie Shaw and Lucy Andrews. In 1899 the two women decided to stop "making clothes for fairly well-off people" and joined the Whiteway colony. In the same place a tailor making natural and undyed wool clothing with co-operatively produced materials was at the service of the public.

The mood spread outside London as well. In Leeds, D.B. Foster, a lay preacher in the Methodist church and a former small manufacturer, relinquished his economic standing and the church which "had no message" for him, in order to establish the true Kingdom of God which for him was "the Kingdom of Right Relations Amongst Men"[1]. In 1897 the electrical workshop of comrade A. Gibson began working on non-commercial lines, dispensing with the use of money, resorting to bartering of services and goods, and living without "pristine selfishness". This commercial complex consisted of a workshop for bicycle repairs and electrical work; a workshop for heavier engineering work, and for the production of bicycle frames; a workshop for puncture repairs, and a shop. In addition, a few rooms provided living quarters, a kitchen and a meeting or reading room in which the members studied or preached the words of Christ as a branch of the Brotherhood Church. In harmony with anarchist principles, the participants worked when they wanted and accepted no payment. However, the lack of commercial restraints was taken advantage of by staff and customers alike. The enterprise proved uneconomic and reverted to a regular commercial basis[2].

1. D.B. Foster, Socialism and The Christ (Leeds, 1921), p. 36.
2. Foster later became the secretary of the Labour Party in Leeds and a member of the City Council.

A similar venture in 1899 in Blackburn was sparked off by a lecture from Kenworthy. The former quakers Tom Ferris and his common-law wife - both from the co-operative in Leeds - were, however, the only members to refuse the use of money. All these exercises foundered after a while.

Thus, the anarchists made their presence felt in the political life of the left in various directions. Yet when one assesses the impact of anarchist activity from the point of view of anarchist aims, it becomes evident that even when it elicited a positive response, it did not spark off a wide movement on anarchist lines. The products of their propaganda almost never measured up to their high ideals and anarchist-inspired ventures did not keep their momentum.

Whatever slim hold the anarchists may have had on the industrial forces, the movement did not provide guidance to the labouring classes as a body, and those individuals who did acquire key positions within labour associations at a national level, were not chosen for their anarchism, but rather in spite of it, and only rarely managed to commit these bodies to anarchist policies. Neither were anarchists able to furnish a parallel set of trade unions to replace the existing ones.

Direct action had been the method of popular radicalism throughout the century, and of the labour movement in its fight against industrialisation and later for securing rights. The anarchists did not succeed as they had aspired in reinforcing among the masses that level of ideological identification necessary to promote direct action, not only as an occasional tactic, but also as an exclusive aim. If at all, the dispossessed responded to anarchist revolutionary exhortations in the heat of the moment and no further. The anarchists wanted the workers to take firm and extra-parliamentary action which would lead them beyond niggling reforms to the expropriatory general strike. But, despite the revolutionary atmosphere prevailing at grass-roots level in the early 1890s and before the First World War, the protesters largely sought redress for immediate economic grievances and never totally forsook the parliamentary road.

The extent of anarchist success seems to have depended a great deal on the degree of their participation in the daily struggles of the workers, not merely as propagandists, but as labour leaders in the full sense of the words. Largely abstaining from such a task explains the limitations of their appeal in the industrial arena. That John Turner, who did take part in such struggles, achieved the position of president of the Shop Assistants' Union, is a good illustration of this[1]. The difference between the influence of the anarchist Leaguers in Norwich, where Mowbray and other anarchists mobilised and offered leadership to the local unemployed, and the isolation and low status of the inactive yet vitriolic anarchists of the S.L. branch in Bradford further illustrates this point. The Jewish anarchists commanded the respect and trust of many Jewish immigrants not only by fulfilling their social and cultural needs, but also by attempting to ease their economic plight.

Except for a few sporadic outbursts, the anarchists were only rarely the catalysts in converting conditions of exploitation into political and social unrest. Almost all models of non-industrial direct action faded away when the masses remained indifferent and even adverse to them. The attempts to provoke demonstrations of non-compliance as in the No Rent Campaign found so little favour that they were abandoned, and the bodies established to assist the determined ones soon disappeared.

The individualist-anarchists only rarely tried to resist the law themselves and were apparently never successful in convincing others to do so. They were destined to remain a small clique of individuals, working largely in isolation, with very few adherents. They took part in the campaigns to undermine the prejudices underlying the socio-economic order and anticipated many of the campaigns that would absorb the

1. The impact of Turner's propaganda can be noted in some of his union's early publications. In a manifesto written in the pioneering days of the union in London in the late '80s, it vowed to "rely on its own strength and strive not only to ameliorate our lot, but remove the cause itself under which we suffer". The manifesto is to be found in N.C. For Turner's dissatisfaction with the union's subsequent direction, see his series of articles in The Voice of Labour starting 4 May 1907.

energies of the left a few decades later, but never became a central strand in the radical front as in America. Similarly, they could not equal their American counterparts in intellectual contributions in the field of individual liberties and sexual tolerance, nor even in economic reform - the focus of their activity. Except for the limited intellectual stimulation of the Freedom Group and of a few extreme individualists, they had no abiding influence. After just over a decade of activity they slid into obscurity.

The societies the communalists erected were practical revolutionary attempts to supersede capitalist competition and commercialism with values of mutual aid, co-operation and communism, and to allow the individual free choice and self-determination without being even remotely controlled by a central body. Yet the colonies failed to maintain a viable and enduring alternative to the industrial system and the workshops to solidify a nucleus for a co-operative commonwealth. A grave shortcoming was their failure to demonstrate brotherhood at work. They failed to banish strife among themselves and often proved, according to a participant, ineffective in handling their affairs. The same person, Aylmer Maude, reflected that in "the years 1897-8 it looked as though a strong Tolstoy movement was growing up in England"[1]. But a decade later only vestigial traces remained. "We had undertaken a task perhaps too hard for any one" he mused[2].

It is interesting that both inspirers of the bids to start life anew objected to such initiatives. In the planning stage, the group in Newcastle invited Kropotkin to become treasurer of the fund. He refused, explaining that he had little faith in communist settlements under existing conditions. He predicted that the members would suffer

1. Aylmer Maude, The Life of Tolstoy. Later Years (London, 1910), p. 546. Aylmer Maude lived and worked in Russia for 23 years. Tolstoy made him feel "dissatisfied with the methods of even so clean and honest a business as the one in which I was engaged" (ibid., p. 532). Reaching the conclusion that he and his wife could live on much less than they had formerly considered necessary, they returned to England and joined the Purleigh community. Aylmer was, however, shortly afterwards to lose heart andlater became a Fabian.
2. ibid., p. 547.

"all sorts of privations" only to find "disappointment at the end". They would spend years far from contact with the masses and therefore be unable to promote their emancipation - all in the interests of an experiment which had a great chance of failure[1].

For different reasons, Tolstoy also thought the experiments premature. His explanation was that perfection could be reached only in concert and not by individual effort. "There cannot be a community of saints among sinners", he stated, and moreover "were one's friends to direct towards their inner spiritual growth all the portion of attention and energy which they devote to the sustainment of the outer form of a community amongst themselves, it would be better both for them and for God's cause"[2]. In principle, all of us, he added, must "direct our whole strength, not to our outer surroundings..., but to the inner life"[3]. Opposing the erection of any Church, especially under his name, he frowned on the existence of the Brotherhood Church and the Tolstoyan societies, notwithstanding his interest in the spread of his ideas in Britain. "The drawbacks of such organisations are much greater than their advantages", he wrote to Percy Redfern, the secretary of the Tolstoy Society in Manchester[4]. For him "to be a member of the old Society that was started by God ... is more profitable for oneself and for mankind than to be a member of limited societies"[5]. Neither he nor Chertkoff - his close associate - ever joined a colony. Outside England, the Tolstoyan colonies in Russia, America and Holland admitted defeat, too.

Against such a background, the contribution of anarchism was not so much in leading discontented elements into activism in a specific, definitive and sustaining way, as perhaps in inculcating "those pure revolutionary principles that make no compromise"[6] and in enhancing rebellious moods.

1. Liberty, March 1895.
2. Letter from Tolstoy to Kenworthy, dated 26 July 1896, in Kenworthy, Tolstoy, p. 243.
3. Letter from Tolstoy to the Brotherhood Church in Croydon, dated March 1896, in Aylmer Maude, Tolstoy and His Problems (London, 1901), p. 62.
4. Percy Redfern, Tolstoy. A Study (London, 1907). p. 5
5. ibid., p. 120.
6. Freedom, Dec. 1900.

The history of British anarchism between 1881-1914 would not be complete without a survey, however brief, of the movement's interaction with the broader socialist forces. Such a survey merits a much larger treatment than will be given to it in the next chapter. The socialist ranks comprised a multitude of groups and organisations, each with its own specific, and often fluctuating, relationship with anarchism. Individual socialists entertained certain strong, if diverse views and feelings about anarchism. Some of them were group leaders or trade union activists, publishers or editors of political papers, pamphlets and books. They exerted a wide influence in the frameworks within which they operated and, in a roundabout way, on the anarchist movement whose fortunes were shaped to an important degree by the attitude of socialist bodies and individuals to it.

The next chapter will only touch upon the changing character of the relationship between the anarchist and the socialist movements and will isolate some of the factors and personalities that played a significant role in determining this relationship.

CHAPTER THREE. ANARCHISM AND THE SOCIALIST MOVEMENT

In the form it was to take in Britain, anarchism was, and conceived itself to be, an integral component of socialism, though this would be repeatedly contested by certain socialist groups and individuals. Even Henry Seymour, the most active and persistent champion of individualist-anarchism, saw himself as representing a socialist trend in line with his two major inspirers, Proudhon and Tucker. Anarchism shared with other socialist currents an attitude of mind, basic assumptions, a radical critique of the social order, terminology and vision. All recognised the inadequacy of the capitalist relations of production and of the bourgeois political system, campaigned for the emancipation of the workers and the end of exploitation and sought to replace the existing system with a free and egalitarian society in which human needs would be fully satisfied. It was the combination of certain axioms, stresses and remedies within this framework which gave anarchism its unique character[1].

In addition to the common ideological ground, socialism and anarchism were inextricably intertwined historically in Britain: the entrance of anarchism on the domestic political scene coincided with the consolidation of other socialist streams; their respective future adherents shared a similar ideological background and political milieu and reacted to the same social conditions.

Socialist perceptions and programmes continued to float in the air after the falling away of Owenite initiatives and the decline of the Chartist movement in the mid 19th century. Yet only in the early 1880s, did socialist propaganda at large experience a major breakthrough and gain any momentum. Many of those who precipitated its revival had been nurtured in the most advanced radical associations of the 1870s, which harboured veteran Owenites, Chartists, Internationalists and foreign revolutionaries, and promoted the progressive issues of the day.

1. For the ideological similarities from an anarchist point of view see Freedom, Feb. 1888.

This milieu furnished some of the young people who, during the 1880s and thereafter, would make up the socialist camp with formative education, and instilled in them a determination to be satisfied with no less than fundamental and structural social transformation.

Yet the road to socialism and its precise nature were far from clear in this period of transition. The experience of a few years of advocating socialism, in a speedily changing social reality in which socialist agitation was one of the motive forces, would give coherence to the different world views of the socialist propagandists and render their political direction more definite and definitive. This development was vigorously taking place during the 1880s. Anarchism was one of the major elements which helped this process. Not only did it constitute part of the socialist vanguard, but was actually a formative inspiration.

Possessing no firm ideological character, the socialist cadres which emerged during the first half of the '80s accommodated anarchist notions alongside other socialist ideas. At that early date, the distinctions between anarchism and other socialist streams "did not count for so much as they now do", testified a contemporary observer of the socialist scene[1]. The immediate task was to spread socialism in any way and through whoever was party to its principles. The banners of the different associations promulgated the same messages. Co-operation and overlapping membership were very common as were joint meetings and demonstrations, all of which were conducive to the interchange of views.

Many of the joint activities were the products of efforts by would-be anarchists. In July 1883, the foreign sections of the Communist Working Men's Club, the Labour Emancipation League, the Stratford Radical Club, the Homerton Social Democratic Club, the Patriotic Club, Chelsea Labour Association, the Manhood Suffrage League (of which Kitz had been a secretary between 1874-77), and the Democratic Federation, signed a manifesto which was imbued with an anarchist

1. Henry S. Salt, Company I have Kept (London, 1930), p. 69.

spirit. Joseph Lane was one of the signatories and, indeed, William Morris described it as an anarchist manifesto[1]. It declared that any government, irrespective of the party controlling it, was but the instrument of the ruling classes, and expressed its mistrust of parliament and the law. If the working classes desired a new order of society "in which everyone should produce according to his ability and consume according to his necessities", they would have to achieve it through their own struggle, it asserted[2]. Denouncing the lack of free speech for socialists, the manifesto quoted the Freiheit case and the anarchist trial in Lyons as notable examples[3], and proclaimed the need for unity and the continuation of the International's work in view of the coming struggle between labour and capital.

Anarchism was constantly spoken and written about. The embryonic socialist press gave it attention both in articles specifically dedicated to the subject and with passing references. Though often under attack, anarchism was at the same time counted among the "Leading Socialistic Theories"[4]. James Mavor, a professor of political economy and statistics at the University of Glasgow and for a short time a member of the Socialist League, certainly saw it in this light[5].

Disillusionment with the Liberal Government of the early '80s and with the limited demands of the radicals on the one hand[6], and belief in the imminence of the revolution on the other, reinforced the status of anarchism which had no faith in governments or parties. The small size of the

1. Letter to Jane Alice Morris, 26 July 1883 in Philip Henderson, ed., The Letters of William Morris (London, 1950), p. 178.
2. "A Manifesto to the Working Men of the World" (London, July 1883). [N.C.] The content of the manifesto was published in the Daily News, 26 July 1883.
3. For details see ch. 1. pp. 17-18; 22-23.
4. For an article under this title see Our Corner, May 1883. At that time the paper, edited by Annie Besant, advocated free thought and radical ideas, but gave much space to socialism. The editor became a convert to socialism in the beginning of 1885. See below p.168. See also To-Day, March 1884.
5. James Mavor, The Wage Statistics and Wage Theories (Edinburgh, 1888), p. 15.
6. For a description of this climate in the nascent socialist circles see James Mavor, My Windows on the Street of the World (London, 1923), vol. 1. p. 174.

socialist vanguard ran counter to the hopes of introducing socialism through parliament and thus validated the anarchist position with regard to representation. The communal solution so prominent in anarchism was compatible with Owenite intentions and with self-help and self-improvement in general. The liberal current that ran through anarchism, through Proudhon and Tucker in particular, rendered the creed more appealing to others.

This is not to say that anarchism was adopted in its entirety on a large scale, nor to imply that its fundamental principles became persistent central trends in socialist thought; only that because it was so popular, exposure to anarchist beliefs was almost a necessary stage in socialist education, a natural step towards ideological maturity for any self-respecting socialist. Thus, if nothing else, anarchism served as a touchstone against which the coherence and morality of other viewpoints could be measured. It stood as an insistent ideology against which the various British socialist trends took shape in the '80s. This was the role anarchism was to play in socialist societies, each of which was initially torn by ideological conflict. The evolution of the three major socialist groupings in this decade will illustrate this inter-relationship.

The Democratic Federation (DF) - from 1884 called the Social Democratic Federation (SDF) - was launched in mid 1881 initially as a radical opposition to Gladstone's Liberal Government, especially to its Irish policies. It hoped to incorporate all the contemporary radical bodies and clubs and form an independent labour party. In the first instance many prominent radicals gave it varying degrees of support, but this interest waned when the Federation appeared too militant in its attitude to the Irish problem and too explicit in its socialist leanings. Those who stayed or those who would join the Federation from 1883 onward inclined to socialism in one form or another. In time, the SDF developed into the leading marxist body in Britain. Yet before it attained a high degree of uniformity of thought, it was to undergo a period of conflict in which libertarian notions came close to gaining ascendancy.

The Federation attracted middle-class intellectuals and self-educated workers, many of whom would be conspicuous in their intellectual or organisational contributions to the advance of socialism in Britain. Despite the diversity of views and ideological mobility that characterised this impressive gallery of individuals, two distinct tendencies were increasingly perceptible inside the Federation. The point of difference centred on the means by which to effect the socialist transformation: one prescription was to promote parliament as the instrument of change, while the other was to refuse to have anything to do with the present representative system at least for the present. Neither of these standpoints necessarily entailed a specific ideological framework. Notwithstanding, each side showed an affinity to a certain socialist world view: the parliamentarian faction was largely collectivist, while the anti-parliamentarian tended towards an undefined libertarian communism. Obviously, the anarchists would belong to the second camp.

The leader of the parliamentarian faction within the Federation was Henry Mayers Hyndman, an erstwhile Tory and a wealthy stockbroker, who became a socialist on the strength of his reading of Marx. His immediate aim was the formation of a political party and his ultimate objective the conquest of political power for the working class. William Morris, who joined the Federation in January 1883, was gradually emerging, if against his will, as the leading spirit of the anti-parliamentarian faction. Morris was the Federation's most famous and invaluable convert. The appeal of his personality drew recruits to socialism in general, to the Federation and to anti-parliamentarianism. In sharp contrast, Hyndman's intrigues and dictatorial manner[1] alienated many members from his side, even if they shared his political views. Despite being both the chairman of the Federation and editor of its paper Justice (published from January 1884), he thirsted for yet more unopposed power.

1. Letter from Morris to Burne-Jones, Aug. 1883 in J.W. Mackail, The Life of William Morris (London, 1921), vol. 2, p. 110.

Hyndman "can accept only one position in ... the SPF, that of master", Morris observed[1]. His behaviour widened the rift in the Federation and brought about a temporary alliance between the anti-parliamentarians and some parliamentarians. His conduct also strengthened the position of his libertarian opponents and lent substance to their suspicions of political parties, by providing a living example of the corrupting influence of power. The conflict thus acquired a personal dimension beyond the ideological controversy. Critical expressions by those who would line themselves against Hyndman indeed alternated between personal and ideological attacks[2].

Until 1884 potential conflict was kept in check. The conflicting views surfaced more explicitly on 11 January 1884. In the course of a meeting, Andreas Scheu, a former active member of the Austrian SPD and from 1874 a refugee in Britain, and Robert Banner, then much under his influence, expressed their deep suspicions of the parliamentary system. Even stronger in his rejection was a Mr. Setterick who proposed "that the time has now arrived when the working classes have to take the question into their own hands; moreover, that all means are justifiable to attain this end"[3]. Morris found Scheu an excellent representative of his side[4].

The participation of the Labour Emancipation League, in the annual conference on 4 August 1884 immediately aggravated the corrosive trial of strength between Hyndman's supporters and his adversaries. The LEL had often collaborated with the Federation before, but only made the decision to affiliate at this conference. Years later, Lane ascribed the late affiliation to his mistrust of Hyndman[5]. The roots of Lane's feelings went back to

1. Letter to Joynes, Christmas Day, 1884 in May Morris, William Morris (Oxford, 1936), vol. 2, p. 588.
2. It is interesting that most contemporary activists, when writing their memoirs, would refer to Hyndman with only qualified approval while Morris earned unreserved praise.
3. Justice, 19 Jan. 1884.
4. Letter to Jane Alice Morris, 16 Jan. 1884 in Henderson, Letters p. 193.
5. Letter to Barker, 22 March 1912. [N.C.]

1880 when Hyndman, then an independent Tory parliamentary candidate in Marylebone, sought the support of Lane who found his views on the important issues of Ireland, foreign policy and universal suffrage Tory in every respect[1]. Lane's libertarian position and personal antipathy made Morris and Hyndman's other opponents his natural allies.

At the same conference Lane had done his best to push the Federation in the direction he favoured. On the initiative of Lane and Blackwell, the Federation adopted the programme of the LEL with only minor alterations. Lane further proposed that "no political action should be taken in the way of putting forward candidates at elections, or in any way countenancing the present political system"[2]. The motion was carried without dissent. The Federation thus pledged itself to a policy of abstentionism. The election at the same meeting of Lane and Mainwaring from the LEL to the Executive Council, opened the door to a further growth of anarchist influence within the Federation.

Predictably, this conference did not ease the friction. "I am afraid we are but at the beginning of our troubles" Morris wrote to Scheu a short while afterwards[3]. It soon became evident that the divergence of opinion and the perssonal animosity were irreconcilable. Matters came to a head in December 1884. At the end of a meeting on the 27th, Hyndman found himself in a minority on the Council, ten out of eighteen members, among them Morris, Lane, Scheu and Banner announced their resignation. The opposition to Hyndman did not use its numerical strength to win an organisational victory. The organisation and Justice stayed in the hands of Hyndman and his followers, while his opponents set up a new body, the Socialist League. At the first opportunity (in April 1885) the Federation reverted to the old programme. However, this experience left a deep mark on it.

While it is true that without Morris and his anti-

1. Lane's memoirs. See also H.W. Lee and E. Archbold, Social Democracy in Britain, (London, 1935), p. 65.
2. Justice, 9 Aug. 1884.
3. Letter dated 13 Aug. 1884. Henderson, Letters, p. 211.

parliamentarian followers, the LEL might not have been victorious in its fight against political socialism, it is also clear that in the mid '80s anarchist views, or those akin to them, carried enough weight to play a crucial role in the fragmentation of the first grand alliance of socialists[1].

Besides the obvious ideological influence of anarchism, the implicit value placed on it at the time gives another strong indication of both its actual and potential force in the early '80s. Hyndman's evaluation of anarchism provides a good illustration. Realistically or not, Hyndman inclined to detect an anarchist ghost behind almost every opponent. As far as he was concerned ideological disaffection and challenges to his authority often betrayed the hand of the anarchists. Andreas Scheu was one such case. In the face of Hyndman's opposition, Scheu, the creator of the Scottish Land and Labour League, attempted to preserve it as a separate body, though affiliated to the SDF, and took steps to form another branch in Glasgow, apart from the one in Edinburgh. Hyndman reacted immediately to such a show of independence. His supporter, C.L. Fitzgerald, wrote to the comrades in the newly-created SDF branch in Glasgow that Scheu "intended to break up the Federation, as an organised body and reduce it to a condition of pure anarchism, which ... would have been fatal and suicidal"[2]. As the next step he himself wrote to Glasgow confirming the accusation[3]. He dealt with his opponent in the Executive, W.J. Clark, in the same manner. Having been charged by the latter with being a dictator, Hyndman connived to expel him from the Federation. To achieve this he denounced him as an anarchist[4]. Hyndman also accused the LFL of anarchism[5], and Morris suspected that he, too, would soon "share the

1. That the split was ideological as well as personal is evident from Morris's letter to E. Chapman, dated 13 April 1885, in which he asserted that "the real difference which underlay all the matter was and is the difference between the parliamentary and the revolutionary method". [S.L. Archives].
2. Letter to Adams, 7 Aug. 1884.[Scheu Archives. I.I.S.H.].
3. See Letter from Morris to Robert Thomson, 1 Jan. 1885 in Elbert Hubbard, ed., William Morris Book (New York, 1907), p. 51.
4. C. Tsuzuki, H.M. Hyndman and British Socialism (Oxford, 1961), p. 65.
5. Lane's memoirs.

distinction"[1].

Hyndman may well have believed that all these men were anarchists: Scheu had been in contact with the German anarchist colony in London and showed an anti-parliamentarian bias; Clark, soon to be the editor of the short-lived journal The Wage Worker, a little later openly expressed his sympathy for anarchism in Seymour's The Anarchist[2]; and the LEL's anarchist leanings and contacts were an established fact. Yet, Scheu withdrew his support from Most and Freiheit in the early '80s precisely upon realising that Most had become an "out-and-out Anarchist"[3]. Clark supported the achievement of anarchism through parliament and majority vote[4], and it was Hyndman who first called the LEL anarchist[5].

In any event, the labels Hyndman so unsparingly used were more than ideological definitions or manifestations of his dread of increasing anarchist strength. Apparently, he thought the anarchist tag sufficiently damning and unpopular to undermine the position of his enemies and perhaps even bring about their fall. Morris himself admitted in the heat of the controversy that "Anarchism ... is a kind of sacramental word with Hyndman"[6]. He employed it as a spell or curse, the use of which exorcised the phenomenon against which it was directed.

Interestingly, Hyndman's perception of anarchism encapsulated its predicament in Britain. Anarchism was a popular cause in the '80s, but as Hyndman instinctively sensed, it was prevented from developing its full potential by the image it radiated. In the early '80s, however, Hyndman's endeavours to capitalise on the pejorative value of the word proved premature and moreover counter-productive. It was precisely the combination of these slurs that was the last

1. Letter to Scheu, 6 Dec. 1884. [Scheu Archives].
2. See his letters from April to July 1885.
3. Justice, 1 Feb. 1914.
4. The Anarchist, July 1885.
5. Letter from Lane to comrades, n.d. (1912?). [N.C.].
6. Letter to Scheu, 6 Dec. 1884. [Scheu Archives].

straw for Morris and some of the others[1]. "The attempt to expel Clark was looked upon by us as a move to stir up bad feelings against a one who was opposed to Mr. Hyndman's pseudo-socialist policy", J.L. Mahon, one of the dissenters of the Executive, explained in a circular to the SDF branches after the split[2]. He added that Hyndman's treatment of Scheu was equally deplored. The proposal to expel Clark was defeated at a meeting on 16 December 1884. Hyndman's attempt to orchestrate a vote of no-confidence in Scheu rebounded on 27 December with the passing of a motion of no-confidence on him. The same meeting decided on the secession.

The Fabian Society of the mid '80s also incorporated a cross-current of anarchism and was to go through a somewhat similar development. Launched on 4 January 1884, it gathered a coterie of individuals, driven by a general dissatisfaction with the status quo and a radical unease about the social, moral and economic climate. Though imbued with the socialist spirit, they lacked a specific direction, a programme or a consistent arrangement of principles. In a manner predictive of the Fabians' standard method, these pioneers set out on a search for coherence during which various circulating currents of thought were investigated and the intricacies of the political milieu around them scrutinized. In this context, it was inevitable that anarchism, enjoying a unique phase of prestige, would be given careful study.

Yet apart from being a topical subject for discussion, anarchism in all its varieties, attracted a ready response. Its themes, though not necessarily in coherent patterns, were close to the hearts of a number of the disparate pathfinders coexisting in the society.

In the first place, the Fellowship of the New Life from

1. See "The Manifesto of the Socialist League" in The Commonweal, Feb. 1885.
2. [S.L. Archives]. See also Morris's explanation of the split in the letter to Robert Thomson, 1 Jan. 1885, Hubbard, pp. 49-55.

which the Fabian Society emerged, spoke a similar language to anarchism. The Fellowship originated from discussion groups of discontented enthusiasts who were determined to remove the evils of capitalism and industrialisation and man's inhumanity to man through a moral regeneration of the individual. In this spirit, the Fellowship was officially inaugurated on 24 October 1883. Relying on moral improvement through individual effort, they were little concerned with political revolution[1], yearning rather to set in motion a new commonwealth by pursuing a life based on the highest ethical precepts. Their ideal society was envisaged as communal living arranged in the light of the values of utmost simplicity, mutual help, physical labour and brotherhood. All this and their lingering interest in quasi-religious universal redemption and in problems of health, closeness to nature and social co-operatives, brought them closer to Tolstoyanism: the anarchist trend which flourished in Britain in the mid '90s[2].

The Fellowship's mentor, Thomas Davidson, opposed socialism and was primarily concerned with inward moral change. The members who expressed an interest in political and social affairs, apart from religion and philosophy, seeing in them the key to change, soon drifted away and organised themselves as the Fabian Society. But a number of them continued their parallel involvement in the Fellowship. Unsurprisingly, this background attracted some Fabians to anarchism.

Furthermore, in the words of Bernard Shaw, one of the society's pioneers:

> "Although exactly the same practical vein which had led its founders to insist on an active policy afterwards made them the most resolute opponents of Insurrectionism, the Constitutionalism which now distinguishes us was as unheard-of at the Fabian meetings in 1884 and 1885 as at the demonstrations of the Social Democratic Federation or the Socialist League ... In

1. William J. Jupp, Wayfarings (London, n.d. 1918?) p. 71.
2. For the similarities between the principles underlying the Fellowship as they were to develop in the 1880s and 1890s and between both communist and Christian-anarchism see the Fellowship's paper The Sower, July 1889.

> short, we were for a year or two just as Anarchist as the Socialist League and just as insurrectionary as the Federation"[1].

Communist-anarchism was considered "a consistent and almost sublime doctrine", and the Freedom Group which began to disseminate this creed drew a sympathetic reaction[2].

That there was a pervasive, though by no means universal, respect for anarchism as an advanced cause in intimate touch with current sources of unrest and equal in its feasibility to collectivism - a version of which was in a short time to take over the Society - was conveyed in the fourth Fabian Tract written in 1886. Entitled What Socialism is it divided socialist opinion abroad equally between these two schools. In Britain, it observed, socialism was not anarchist or collectivist at this juncture, not yet definite enough in point of policy to be classified, nor conscious of itself. "But when the conscious Socialists of England discover their position, they also will probably fall into two parties: a Collectivist party supporting a strong central administration, and a counterbalancing Anarchist party defending individual initiative against that administration"[3]. This forecast was followed by a detailed survey of both schools. Though the section about anarchism was written by Charlotte Wilson, who had by then become an avowed anarchist and whose tone therefore was predictably favourable, the prediction and the space dedicated to the subject reveal much of the climate of opinion in the Society as a whole.

Charlotte Wilson was the Fabian Society's most outspoken anarchist. It was in her house that special sessions dedicated to Proudhon's teachings took place. She also tried to pursue the 'simple life' recommended by the Fellowship of the New Life and retired to a cottage on Hampstead Heath. As an Executive member (from December 1884), she occupied an important position in the Society. Other

1. The Fabian Society. Fabian Tract No. 41. (London, 1892), p. 4.
2. Edward R. Pease, The History of the Fabian Society (London, 1963), p. 31.
3. Fabian Tract. No. 4, p. 6.

anarchists or would-be anarchists who participated in the Society's activities were Dr. Burns-Gibson (who was involved in the Fellowship and in founding the Fabian Society), Mrs. N.F. Dryhurst, James Tochatti and Agnes Henry (also from the Fellowship).

There were Fabians over whom anarchism exercised a strong, though not total attraction. Fdward Pease (later the secretary of the Fabian Society) demonstrated his bias by supporting Seymour's The Anarchist when it first appeared (March 1885). Bernard Shaw was more thorough in his commitment. A student of Proudhon and in personal contact with Tucker, he saw in the blend of mutualism and the highly popular individualist philosophy of Henry George a very appealing answer to the social question. It was mainly in the economic sphere that he adopted the mutualist position. As for politics, he believed in the necessity of a state and its institutions. Still, from his concurrent reservations about the nature of government - expressed in the second Fabian Tract - and from his theoretical endeavours to curb the evolution of an oppressive centralised administration, it is clear that he took into account the uncompromising stand of anarchism in this respect as well. Thus in "the mid-eighties, land nationalisation and the public functions connected with it formed his only serious deviation from individual-Anarchism"[1].

So strongly did Shaw feel about anarchism at the time that he agreed to defend it against current criticism. His article entitled "What's in a Name?" appeared in the first issue of Seymour's The Anarchist[2]. Though qualified with the proviso that the anarchism he set forth was only "How an Anarchist might put it" the article could be said to expose the quintessence of what attracted Shaw. The anarchist was portrayed as the archetypal rebel "who would

1. Willard Wolfe, From Radicalism to Socialism (New Haven, 1975), p. 143. See pp. 131-49 and 284-91 for a detailed analysis of Shaw's attitude to anarchism during the 1880s.
2. The Anarchist, March 1885.

call no man Master" and no authority his own. His mission was to obstruct the coming of authority, "to hasten its banishment; to mistrust its expediency, however specious the instance; and to maintain incessant protest against all its forms throughout the world"[1].

Soon, however, Shaw embarked upon a route which was clearly carrying him in the opposite direction. Under the impact of events and predominant socialist trends, and the influence of Sidney Webb and the economic theories of W.S. Jevons he was to go through a period of searching from which he emerged in the latter part of the decade a partisan of collectivism and parliamentary democracy. Nonetheless, he was to enjoy a life-long flirtation with anarchism. The individualist school lost its hold over him[2]. After the mid '80s it was largely Kropotkin's version of anarchism and, for that matter, Kropotkin's personality that held a certain fascination for Shaw, although he criticised communist-anarchism as either unattainable or too idealistic[3]. He was to persist in oscillating between a strong condemnation of anarchist reasoning and a warm partiality for its perfectionist moral standpoint and individualistic principle[4]. In any event, his attacks were almost always qualified and in general conducted in an uncharacteristically soft tone.

What, above all, betrayed the hold anarchism retained on Shaw was his continued preoccupation with the subject. He lectured widely about it and referred to it in his writings. He also contributed articles to anarchist papers, and on several occasions - as at the time of the Chicago and Walsall affairs - rushed to the defence of individual anarchists or groups. Literary critics have

1. Tucker published the same article a month later in Liberty (Boston). In 1889 Seymour published it as a pamphlet entitled Anarchism Versus State Socialism.
2. See his article "A Refutation of Anarchism" published in Our Corner May-July 1888. In 1893 it was revised and published as Fabian Tract No. 45 entitled The Impossibilities of Anarchism.
3. See The Impossibilities of Anarchism. Also To-Day, Sept. 1887.
4. See Bernard Shaw, "The Illusions of Socialism", in Edward Carpenter, ed., Forecasts of the Coming Century (Manchester, 1897). See also Shaw's article "Why I am a Social Democrat", in Liberty (London), Jan. 1894.

repeatedly alluded to the anarchist elements in his plays - particularly Major Barbara and Heartbreak House[1]. On Kropotkin's 70th birthday, in 1912, Shaw still wondered "whether Kropotkin had not been all these years in the right and he and his friends in the wrong"[2], and as late as 1914 he was still half-advocating anarchism in a lecture[3].

The new elements filtering into the Fabian Society during 1885 and 1886 gave currency to, and thus strengthened, sentiments opposing, and even hostile to anarchism. With the arrival of Sidney Webb (May 1885), a powerful recruit, the spirit of utilitarianism and positivism was in the ascendant. He resented sentimental moralising and accentuated the need to subject the individual to the social good. At best, the anarchist was "too good for this world"[4]. The papers articulating the society's current stands - The Practical Socialist, To-Day and Our Corner - stressed time and again that revolutions were ineffective and, moreover, that the British temperament "stolid, cautious, routine, respectful of authority, and prudent, law-abiding and order loving", abhorred revolutionary designs and would only be put off by them[5]. At the same time anarchism was rejected as a form of Liberalism[6]. Shaw tells us that by 1886 the Fabians had already found that they "were of one mind as to the advisability of setting to work by the ordinary political methods and having done with Anarchism and vague exhortations to Emancipate the Workers"[7].

No time was lost in making this position official. The bone of contention was not so much anarchism as a comprehensive theory, but, as elsewhere, principally its anti-

1. For such interpretations see James W. Hulse, Revolutionists in London (Oxford, 1970), pp. 200-13. Also Augustin Hamon, The Technique of Bernard Shaw's Plays, trans. F. Maurice, (London, 1912) p. 60.
2. George Woodcock and Ivan Avakumović, The Anarchist Prince (London, 1950) p. 265.
3. Allan Chappelow, Shaw ~ 'The Chucker-out' (London, 1969) p. 340.
4. Sidney Webb, Socialism in England (London, 1908) p. 55 , n. (First published in 1889).
5. The Practical Socialist, Feb. 1886.
6. To-Day, Sept. 1887. See also Hubert Bland in The Practical Socialist, Oct. 1886.
7. Fabian Tract No. 41. p. 12.

parliamentarian principle. The battle was waged throughout 1886 and ended in total defeat for the anarchists. Leading the fight against them were the strong-minded Annie Besant ? (who joined in June 1885) and Hubert Bland (a founding member), both of whom in the manner of the SDF wanted to form an independent working-class party which would eventually take control of the means of production, but in the meantime introduce social changes through the law. Acting on the strength of this belief, Besant moved a resolution at a multi-party meeting on 17 September 1886 "That it is advisable that Socialists should organise themselves as a political party", and was seconded by Bland[1]. Morris moved a rider to this that "the first duty of the Socialists is to educate the people to understand what their present position is, and what their future might be". A parliamentary party would only hinder that education and obscure those principles. Davis of the S.L. seconded. Besant's resolution was carried by 47 to 19 and Morris's rider rejected by 40 to 27. It gradually became clear that the real opposition came from outside - from the S.L. ranks who frequented Fabian gatherings - and not from within the Society. Nonetheless, in order to avoid an open clash with Wilson and her supporters, whilst still getting underway the policy of both local and general electionism, Besant proposed that the members who were for political action should form themselves into a Fabian Parliamentary League. This was a rebuff for the Fabian anarchists, yet they displayed only token resistance. With one dissenter the proposal was carried at a meeting in November. Shaw was later to reflect: "Indeed, it is a question with us to this day whether they did not owe their existence solely to our own imaginations"[2].

By the close of 1886 Wilson resigned, others joined the Freedom Group or the S.L., and anarchism in the Fabian Society became a dead issue. Here, too, it had helped the process of ideological clarification, but as soon as scattered insights cohered into some sort of an exclusive

1. Our Corner, Oct. 1886.
2. Fabian Tract No. 41, p. 14.

position, anarchism had no further function.

The question of parliamentary action beset the society for only several months more. Besant and Bland outargued the anarchists but were not themselves ultimately victorious in their aim. The Parliamentary League managed to expand into the provinces and launched a few branches, but later turned into the Political Committee of the Society and then dissolved. The Fabian Society followed a different path, essentially mapped out by Shaw and the Webbs, of collectivism, support for a centralised and regulating government and the permeation of Fabianism into the middle class and governing institutions of the country, all of which obscured the formative part anarchism had once played in the society.

The strength of anarchism in the 1880s was demonstrated above all in the complete control the theory was to gain over the S.L., a body expected by many to be the focal point for the nascent socialist forces in Britain and the base of "a genuine mass movement" after the split from the SDF[1]. The transference of allegiance of most of the anti-parliamentarian elements to the League made it an anti-parliamentarian stronghold and an ideal environment in which to nurture anarchism.

The frontiers between communist-anarchism and anti-parliamentarian socialism, as chiefly fashioned by William Morris, were not clear or fixed at the birth of the League in December 1884. In the first few years the anarchists were in the process of consolidation during which there was little to distinguish their outlook from that of Morris. Whoever belonged to the anti-parliamentarian camp tended to be a communist upholder of the principles of international revolutionary socialism and the class struggle, sharing a belief in the corrupting and stagnating influence of repres-

1. For Engels's hopes regarding the S.L. see his letter to Sorge, 29 Jan. 1886 in The Labour Monthly, Nov. 1933. He soon lost hope however. A few months later he lamented that the S.L. "is more and more passing into the hands of the anarchists". See his letter to Liebknecht dated 12 May 1886 in the same source.

entative political activity[1] and a rejection of half-measures and seeking relief from the state[2]. To them, nothing less than a complete social revolution would improve the situation and solve the anomalous conditions of the workers. Morris's overriding concern was to maintain the League as an uncorrupted and truly moral body[3] whose mission was "to educate and organise the workers to take control of their own affairs with a view to the establishment of federated industrial communes as the future form of society"[4]. The anarchist-inclined Leaguers had no quarrel with this objective either at this stage.

For his part, Morris's postulates coincided to a great extent with Kropotkin's. Like him he put his faith in the goodness of man and the power of education and conceived the ideal society in terms of small voluntary communes practising a new morality and federated on a decentralised basis. He was highly respectful of the freedom of the individual and distrustful of ambitious leadership and centralising tendencies, anticipating that the future individual would be able to follow the intellectual and aesthetic pursuits congenial to his nature and in harmony with his social responsibilities. Privately, Morris even defined his position as "semi-anarchism"[5]. According to Bruce Glasier, a great admirer and supporter of Morris and a member of the Glasgow branch of the League, "It had indeed been easier on the whole for him to get on with the Anarchists than with the parliamentarians, for the simple reason that the matter of parliamentary policy was involved in almost every practical question that arose, whereas anarchism as a practical system was, or seemed to be, a question of the far future"[6]. Personally, too, Morris appeared to have liked the anarchists better than he did

1. The Commonweal, July 1885.
2. "The Manifesto of the Socialist League", The Commonweal, Feb. 1885.
3. Letter to Bruce Glasier, 1 Dec. 1886 in J. Bruce Glasier, William Morris, and the Early Days of the Socialist Movement (London, 1921), p. 187.
4. The Commonweal, 27 Nov. 1886.
5. Letter to Mrs. Burne-Jones, 31 Oct. 1885, Mackail, Vol. 2, p. 149.
6. Glasier, p. 124.

the others in the League[1].

The anarchists would gradually emerge as the staunchest and most uncompromising wing of the anti-parliamentarian faction. That there should be no political activity and no gradual reforms were the sine qua non for them and not merely a matter of tactics as for many of Morris's followers and in fact for Morris himself. While the anarchists did not recognise such tendencies as permissible under any circumstances, Morris acquiesced in a socialist parliament backed by a great body of enlightened opinion and whose representatives went there as "rebels"[2]. He believed in such democratic procedures as delegation of power and majority rule[3], admitted that there were some good laws[4], and conceded some kind of authority in society[5]. He also predicted that "State Socialism will have to intervene between our present break down and communism"[6]. Unlike the anarchists he placed special emphasis on the need to organise and trusted that the revolution would be the end result of a long and gradual process of change of consciousness and not a cataclysmic event.

Notwithstanding the differences in emphasis, the combined distrust of parliamentary politics and reforms, centralisation and authority constituted enough of a common ground for an alliance between the anti-parliamentarian members and the sympathisers of revolutionary anarchism. This collaboration stood against any attempt to sway the League in the opposite direction.

The League was not cohesive in its infancy. People joined it for a variety of reasons. Some recruits simply

1. Letter to Dr. H. Glasse, 23 May 1887, R. Page Arnot, introd., Unpublished Letters of William Morris, Labour Monthly Pamphlet, ser. No. 6(1951), p. 5. Morris's warm feelings and regard for Lane are evident in Morris's letters to him. On 21 May 1889 he wrote to Lane: "I always looked upon you as one of the serious members of the League". [B.M. ADD. MS. 46345].
2. Ibid. See also letter from Morris to Lane, 30 March 1888. [B.M. ADD. MS. 46345].
3. The Commonweal, 17 Aug. 1889.
4. Glasier, pp. 63-64.
5. The Commonweal, 4 May 1889.
6. Letter to Rev. George Bainton, 10 April 1888, in Morris, William, Letters on Socialism (London, 1894), p. 21.

preferred the ethical tone of the League to the technological and deterministic orientation of the SDF and were not particular about the means to be used to achieve socialism. Others followed personalities rather than principles[1]. But the withdrawal from the Federation also brought over to the League some of the most dedicated supporters of parliamentarianism and of the establishment of a workers' party. Foremost among these were Marx's daughter, Eleanor, and her common-law husband, Edward Aveling, who enjoyed Engels's patronage and were guided by his advice. Although as marxists their thinking was akin to his, they had left Hyndman and joined forces with Morris, not because they agreed with him but rather because they disliked Hyndman's personality and resented his jingoism and failure to emphasise the international character of the socialist movement. Furthermore, they had nursed a deep grudge against Hyndman since his failure to acknowledge Marx as the inspiration of his England for All[2]. As a result of this situation, the League was for a long time inhibited from attaining any consensus on tactics and strategy.

The disonance between the anti-parliamentarians and their opponents was felt right from the beginning. The struggle for supremacy was chiefly fought out in the General Council of the League in London, affecting the provincial branches only marginally. For a short while it seemed that the parliamentarians had the upper hand: the first draft of the League's constitution, written by the Avelings under the guiding spirit of Engels, recommended the seizure of political power and the election of socialists to various administrative bodies. It was adopted by the Provisional Council of the League at the beginning of 1885. However, the manifesto of the League, published in the first issue of the League's organ The Commonweal (February 1885), neglected this political path and emphasised instead the need to educate the people in socialist principles and to

1. See letter from Tom Barclay, 19 July 1885. [S.L. Archives].
2. In later writings, Hyndman acknowledged his indebtedness but it did not sweeten the relationship between him and Marx's clan. For the Avelings' motivation see letter from Eleanor to Laura, 31 Dec. 1884 in Yvonne Kapp, Eleanor Marx Vol. 2. (London, 1979), p. 61.

organise them in order to prepare them to take over the management of society when the final crisis occurred. New members signed a card committing themselves to the principles in the manifesto. The constitution, finally adopted by the first annual conference on 5 July 1885, did not include any article in support of political activity. All this did not yet mark a decisive tilting of the balance in favour of an anarchist outlook. It was rather Morris's moderate libertarianism which dominated in the first few years and was pronounced in the League's literature.

The parliamentarian opposition did not surrender and tension mounted within the League. To try to resolve the internal dispute once and for all, it was decided in November 1886 to set up a committee whose task would be to write a thorough analysis of the different opinions and draft a working policy accordingly[1]. Belfort Bax, a close associate of Engels, and Thomas Binning, The Commonweal's main writer on trade union matters, represented the parliamentarian faction, and Lane and Mahon, both of whom were called anarchists at the time[2], the anti-parliamentarian. Within a few months, to Lane's surprise and indignation, Mahon joined the other side.

Mahon's change of heart was not exceptional in the League which was undergoing great ideological changes in 1887 and 1888. The experience and insight some members gained agitating among the people whose emancipation they set out to achieve, stimulated rethinking and consequently reformulations of means and ends. These partisans now thought that the successful introduction of socialism demanded different approaches from those suggested by the League's Council, and added their voice to those who complained that the preoccupation of the League with theoretical problems was irrelevant to the workers and that many of their arguments were too abstract to have a wide appeal or any actual effect[3].

1. See handbill by Joseph Lane (1887). [S.L. Archives].
2. Letter from Lane to Marsh, early 1912(?) [N.C.].
3. See John Lincoln Mahon, A Labour Programme (London, 1888), p. 63. For complaints about the abstract content of The Commonweal see letter from William Barker to the League, 26 Sept. 1887. [S.L. Archives].

During his agitation among the Northumberland miners in 1887, the Leaguer A.K. Donald learned that all the miners were in favour of political activity[1]. Mahon, who at the same time launched himself into new areas in the Midlands, Scotland and the North, shared his experience[2]. Yet salvation through the existing parties seemed remote and the Government was unresponsive. The Report of the Royal Commission on Trade (published in January 1887) did not evince any determination on the part of the authorities to improve the situation of the workers. As against this, the success of Mahon, Donald and socialists from other groups in infiltrating the ranks of both the organised and unorganised industrial forces and in swaying a significant minority to socialism, convinced some of the purists in the League that if socialists fought alongside the workers for the amelioration of working conditions, they would better understand their plight, win their confidence and give them a socialist orientation. With the workers' support, socialism seemed within realistic reach. For a growing number of socialists inside and outside the League this was a pointer towards immediate reforms and gradualism as well as Parliamentarianism. Besides Mahon and Donald, Leaguers like Banner and Scheu moved to the parliamentarian belief that a socialist-inspired and united working-class party could transform parliament into a democratic vehicle serving the interests of the workers, and that the prospective state, guided and urged by such a parliament to conduct its affairs according to socialist principles could organise industry and control the means of production most efficiently and justly.[3]

For anarchists and the other anti-parliamentarians in the League the new mood was obviously a retrogression from the revolutionary aim. They reacted to it by taking every opportunity to stress the purist policy. Abstentionism from parliamentary action - "hitherto pursued by the League" was endorsed in the third annual conference on 29 May 1887[4].

1. The Commonweal, 14 May 1887.
2. For Mahon's activities see his reports and letters in The Commonweal throughout 1887.
3. See Platform of the Labour Union (London, 1889).
4. The Commonweal, 4 June 1887.

Although basically sympathetic to strikers, the unemployed and other underprivileged in their mounting campaigns for the betterment of their lot, the anti-parliamentarians, believing in the futility of short-term reforms, responded to the evident unrest among the workers by opposing industrial struggles which did not have the total emancipation of the workers as a starting point[1], and the members were advised to stand aloof from the agitation of the trade unions and of the unemployed[2].

The parliamentarians, most vigorously represented in the Council by the Bloomsbury branch, whose spokesmen were the Avelings and Donald, still hoped to sway the League in its direction, and the vituperative controversy continued unabated, reaching a peak in the middle of 1888. This branch was pursuing its own independent policy in line with its original stand, but against the Council's resolutions. It took part in the activities of parliamentarian groups and collaborated with the SDF and in election campaigns. The anti-parliamentarians in the League were determined to force the rebellious branch to withdraw from the League, and exerted pressure on it. The fourth annual conference on 20 May 1888 reitereated its support for anti-parliamentarianism by 20 votes to 5. Donald's proposal to amend the constitution so as to back parliamentary candidates fell by 19 votes to 6[3]. A week later a resolution was passed suspending the branch until it acted in comformity with the League's rules and regulations as determined at the last two conferences. The statement of policy issued subsequently reaffirmed the intolerance of the League towards parliamentarianism in its midst[4]. Eventually, the Bloomsbury branch succumbed and sent a letter on 25 June to the Council declaring its total autonomy, and soon afterwards severed all connections with the League, changing its name to the Bloomsbury Socialist Union.

An increasing number of members refused to abide by the

1. See "Strikes and the Labour Struggle" (Handbill.) Issued by the Strike Committee of the S.L. (Jan. 1887). [S.L. Archives].
2. The Commonweal, 22 Oct. 1887.
3. Minutes of the Conference. [S.L. Archives].
4. The Commonweal, 9 June 1888.

Council's resolutions, especially in the face of the new mood in the workers' quarters and the emergence of the new unions of the unskilled. Some, principally in the northern branches, neglected the Council's prescriptions while still operating in the orbit of the League. Others, like Bax and Scheu, gradually seeped away, joining or returning to the SDF, or establishing new socialist bodies with parliamentary objectives, like Mahon and Donald who at the end of 1887 formed the North of England Socialist Federation and in 1889 set up the Labour Union together with other erstwhile League members. Even Hoxton - the only LEL branch to survive intact - opted for parliamentarianism and in 1888 withdrew its affiliation from the League. In addition, the League's branches in Walsall, Marylebone, Acton and Nottingham disintegrated in the same year.

By sheer force of numbers, the growth in power of the anti-parliamentarians in the League became inevitable as more of their opponents drifted away. By the summer of 1888, the Council was a purely anti-parliamentarian body. Factionalism was not eliminated from the League however. Cracks began to show within the anti-parliamentarian camp. The Council and a few branches became the battleground between the followers of Morris and the anarchists, who, in the heat of the power struggle with the parliamentarians and under the impact of the same factors that boosted the popularity of anarchism generally in the country, grew in number, consolidated themselves, determined their position and became a distinct group.

Until this time the differences between the two had been obscured by generic similarities and a shared enemy. Now, with growing strength and a definite sense of direction, the anarchists were in Morris's words "determined to drive things to extremity, and break us up if we do not declare for Anarchy"[1]. Morris, whose support had been greatly conducive to the ascendancy of the anarchist caucus in the Council, was determined not to let them do so. But the situation had by then been reversed and the anarchists

1. Letter to Glasier, 15 Dec. 1888 in Glasier, p. 196.

became the predominant faction. The new anti-parliamentarian recruits were imbued with an uncompromising spirit, and hence joined the anarchists, whereas many of Morris's followers stayed in the League, not f r any principle, but out of respect for Morris's sentiments; a gesture which only weakened the circle around him and gradually also reduced its size. More anarchists were elected to the Council in 1888 and 1889 and anarchist reasoning was voiced more than ever from the Leagues platforms and in its publications.

Whatever differences there were between anarchism and Morris's anti-parliamentarianism were no obstacle to co-operation as long as all agreed on tactical matters. When they felt that "An affected bravado of 'do as you please and damn public opinion' was accepted as a substitute for any declaration or witness of socialist conviction"[1] Morris and his followers began to draw apart mentally from the League.

Morris had always differed from the anarchists on the subject of violent confrontation with the authorities. Apart from his instinctive dislike of the prospect of bloodshed, he believed that it would not change the slavery of the workers and "would not shake the authorities at all, but would strengthen rather, because they would draw to them the timid of all classes; i.e., all men but a very few"[2]. Violence, in his view, could only generate more violence and trigger a reactionary response by the authorities in the form of oppresive laws, which he, unlike some anarchists, would not welcome. Moreover, the experience of Bloody Sunday demonstrated to him once and for all the strength of "the forces of the modern State against an imperfectly organised crowd" and made him even more doubtful about "popular civil rising"[3]. His chief aim remained the education of the people in the tenets of socialism. He feared that aggressive propaganda would only damage the cause.

Morris's discontent grew with each passing month. In the spring of 1890 he bitterly remarked: "Outside the Hammer-

1. Ibid. p. 126.
2. The Commonweal, 15 Nov. 1890.
3. Bax, pp. 87-88.

smith branch the active (?) members in London mostly consider themselves Anarchists, but don't know anything about Socialism, and go about ranting revolution in the streets, which is about as likely to happen in our time as the conversion of Englishmen from stupidity to quick wittedness"[1]. In addition, his views were now being heavily and widely criticized. The growing militancy in the League finally set him on a collision course with the anarchists. In July 1890 he wrote to Nicoll, editor of The Commonweal, threatening "to withdraw all support" if the paper's declarations were not mitigated[2], and unheeded he finally made his departure.

Morris's withdrawal coincided with and was followed by an exodus of members. The feelings of Tom Maguire from Leeds were typical. He found it impossible to work together with the "demented" anarchists who were not only "conspicuous by their absence" from industrial struggles in which he and other members were involved, and "warred over matters which are the outcome of personal feeling and not principle", but also advocated physical force on the public platform[3]. A preponderance of those who departed joined the drive towards an independent labour party. Morris's own Hammersmith branch reorganised itself as the Hammersmith Socialist Society and continued under Morris's guidance. The Society's self-defined mission remained the education of the people in "the elementary truths of Socialism"[4]; but it was now, together with Morris, more open to the acceptance of a socialist party attaining the necessary instruments to reorder the social system through the vote[5]. The 'stepping-stones' policy was also conceded albeit grudgingly[6]. Furthermore, the new paper of the Society, the

1. Letter to Glasier, 6 April 1890, Glasier, p. 202.
2. Letter dated 19 July 1890 in Henderson, Letters, p. 324.
3. Letter to Carpenter, 30 July 1890 in Tom Maguire, A Remembrance (Manchester, 1895), p. xi. For Maguire's activities see E.P. Thompson "Homage to Tom Maguire", in Asa Briggs and John Saville, eds., Essays in Labour History (London, 1960).
4. Statement of Principles of the Hammersmith Socialist Society (London 1890), pp. 5-6.
5. William Morris "Why I am a Communist" in Liberty, Feb. 1894.
6. Hammersmith Socialist Record, Aug. 1892.

Hammersmith Socialist Record (launched in October 1891) proclaimed that anarchism was antagonistic to socialism[1]. Their association with anarchists had obviously left some anti-parliamentarians with a bitter taste.

The anti-parliamentarian front thus disintegrated, leaving the League and the other anarchist groups almost alone to represent it in the spectrum of the left. But, as will soon be shown, the anarchists were unable to sustain a permanent power base inside the socialist movement on an anti-parliamentarian ticket. The League disappeared even before this became evident. Beset by attacks from without and internal divisions, it rapidly lost more members and was reduced to a splinter group capable of stirring the masses only very marginally. What began as a clarion call - with the commitment of high-calibre individuals, the dedication of a fair number of rank and file and the support of revolutionary parties abroad[2] - died away as a mere whimper. Ten years after its birth, the League was defunct. Thus, to the same extent that the victory of the anarchists in the League signified the strength of anarchist views at a certain point in the history of the British labour movement, it equally illustrated the inability of the anarchists to profit from this state of affairs, and hence their weakness in relation to conventional politics in Britain.

In the latter part of the 1880s ideological affiliation was ever more reflected in organisational demarcation. Within a limited range of fluctuations, each of the major socialist groupings was by 1888 virtually set on its singular path; a process which had involved the disappearance of an internal anarchist opposition, as in the case of the SDF and Fabian Society, and a corresponding concentration of anarchists in the S.L. and in confessedly anarchist groups.

Though more and more self-contained, anarchism enjoyed

1. Ibid. June 1892.
2. See the letters of Bebel, Liebknecht, Paul Lafargue, Leo Frankel and Kautsky to the League in The Commonweal, March 1885.

high prestige as a social gospel almost throughout the 80's. John Burns, the trade union leader - then a member of the SDF and later a Liberal politician - publicly declared himself on the side of free communism, arguing that his only disagreement with communist-anarchism was that he saw social democrary as a stepping-stone to communism[1]. But apart from the anarchist vision of an ideal society, anarchist prescriptions for attaining it also attracted attention. The search for a theoretical framework had largely ended in the pioneer socialist associations. Yet, although ideological allegiance was more a product of heart-searching over means than over goals, and however much each organisation was already committed to its own chosen methods, socialism was still to a great extent in a state of flux regarding strategy and tactics in the latter half of the decade.

The period was marked by repeated attempts by the authorities in London to suppress the free expression of dissenting views, which only increased the number and size of open-air meetings protesting in the name of such causes. The appointment of the erstwhile army General, Charles Warren, in March 1886 as Commissioner of Police intensified police interference and led to closer and more frequent co-operation between socialists and radicals in resisting such moves. The resulting succession of confrontations between police and demonstrators threw into relief the sharp division between the forces of change and those holding them back and thus highlighted the common enemy. In view of the massive support for these campaigns, the belief in the potential strength of the masses to effect changes directly continued to gain ground in certain socialist quarters. In this tempestuous atmosphere, enhanced by the anarchist trial in Chicago, and against the background of a need to define programmes, anarchist reasoning as to methods, whether related directly to the doctrine or not, continued to carry some weight. The anarchists continued to be recognised as a radical ally in the struggle against the encroachment of

1. Freedom, Aug. 1888.

the authorities and a socialist partner in the war against capitalism.

Against some persistent calls for disengagement from anarchism, voices like that of Tom Bolas - the editor of The Practical Socialist - asserted that anarchist and collectivist should work hand in hand proclaiming the ideal of socialism[1]. Both schools, a contemporary confirmed, indeed joined "in their protests and denunciations of the existing economic system"[2]. They participated in each other's meetings and sold the same sort of literature. Together with other socialists and radicals, the anarchists were brought to trial, fined or imprisoned. Shaw was to explain that "the real reason why Anarchist and Socialist worked then shoulder to shoulder as comrades and brothers was that neither one nor the other had any definite idea of what he wanted or how it was to be got"[3].

The revolutionary mood was particularly pronounced in the SDF. In the latter part of the '80s, this body was still smarting under the impact of the Tory gold fiasco which discredited it for taking money from the Tory party in order to defeat Liberal candidates in the November 1885 election, while its own two candidates in London polled a meagre 59 votes between them. The SDF won back its lost reputation by taking a lead in stirring up demonstrations of the unemployed. The subsequent waves of social discontent and the rigorous way in which the authorities met the challenge in 1886 and 1887 had the effect of galvanising the SDF into a momentary phase in which its leaders, consciously or not, echoed various anarchist arguments.

Harry Quelch, Hyndman's right-hand man, readily admitted that "Under certain conditions assassination would be a means to the end we have in view", though he hurried to qualify this by saying that those "conditions do not obtain here now"[4]. He stressed the advantages to be gained by

1. The Practical Socialist, March 1887. Also June 1886.
2. Walter Crane, An Artist's Reminiscences (London, 1907), p. 258. For another testimony see Joseph Burgess, John Burns, (Glasgow, 1911), pp. 28, 33.
3. Fabian Tract. No. 41, p. 16.
4. Justice, 31 Dec. 1887.

"getting inside the citadel" and obtaining political power, "before the fighting begins", but, as a revolutionary, he called upon the workers to organise and drill so as to be ready to fight, and simultaneously advocated "physical force whenever the use of physical force may be effectual in evolving the new order".

Employing the style and terminology of anarchism, Hyndman himself declared: "Our countrymen and country women will not be fed or clothed by the promise of a vote a year or two hence, or by the privilege of electing one of their employers to represent them"[1]. History had shown him, he said, that centuries of political activity had not done much social good and "that every great advance" had been carried over the head of the House of Commons "by actual or possible intimidation". Though soon to become a bitter opponent of all kinds of direct action, he concluded at this point that "political action is after all quite secondary" and though he recommended that parliamentary efforts should not be altogether foresworn, he urged his readers to see clearly "that we have much more chance of getting revolutionary political change through vehement social agitation". Apologetically, Justice explained that even if the SDF adopted political and municipal action "we utterly distrust politics"[2]. The atmosphere in the Federation was such that at the annual conference in August 1888 "Political action was ... very grudgingly accepted, and no disavowal of violence was made"[3].

Yet after a brief flirtation with revolutionary hopes and formulae, the main body of labour thinking rebuffed the vestiges of the uncompromising approach to change and turned more decisively to the achievement of its social and economic goals through reform by legislation. The key to political progress came increasingly to be seen as evolutionary change, while control of the government was regarded as the desirable culmination of socialism. "Labour found it more and more desirable to be represented on school boards, boards of guardians, town councils and the like, as such bodies were looking after an increasing range of subjects

1. Ibid., 1 Jan. 1887.
2. Ibid., 31 March 1888.
3. Tsuzuki, Hyndman, p. 83.

which affected the workers' standard of life"[1].

Put in a practical perspective, the full implications of certain positions became clearer to the socialist pioneers and the degree of their relevance to the British political scene more obvious. Bloody Sunday was a turning point in this respect. The sight of tens of thousands of people streaming into Trafalgar Square on 13 November 1887 and the great solidarity of the progressive sections that was thereby demonstrated against the Government's attitude to free speech and treatment of the Irish problem, must have been very encouraging to the participants. But by the end of the day, with the crowds spectacularly dispersed, hopes of promoting social objectives by direct confrontation were undermined. Henceforth the favourable response of the masses to socialism was expected to bear fruit at the polls. Subsequent demonstrations which ended similarly drove the conclusion home.

The consolidation of this position in effect meant the repudiation of most of what anarchism stood for. Moreover, this ideological disavowal was soon to be accompanied by an organisational rejection. If the late '80s witnessed the withdrawal of liberal radicals - with the exception of a few ultras - from collaboration with socialists in the face of overtly socialist pronouncements during the joint campaigns, the period also saw the beginning of a steady retraction by socialists of various shades from overt contact with anarchists. This trend was by no means a consequence of ideological divergence alone; divisions of opinions rent the socialist ranks, yet they did not preclude joint action. It was rather a product of the almost universal wish in the socialist movement to shun association with violent tactics, an outgrowth of the mounting conviction that threats of violence were not at all p pular and could only hamper the cause of socialism. As it happened, the move away from extremist politics coincided with the appearance of intemperate language within the anarchist camp. If public opinion was to be the driving

1. Eric J. Hobsbawm, ed., Labour's Turning Point 1880 - 1900 (Hassocks, 1974), p. xxiii.

force behind the advance of socialism - whether through inner conviction or the vote - dissociation from anarchism appeared highly desirable.

The first consistent anarchist support for violent tactics surfaced at the end of 1888 during the visit to Britain of the American, Lucy Parsons, the wife of Albert Parsons, executed in Chicago. In a series of lectures and public speeches, sponsored by the S.L. and Freedom Group, she justified the use of any means in the war against "the armed forces of tyranny"[1] and was greatly applauded by the anarchist audience, excited by her speeches and personal tragedy. The press at once raised the alarm and the question of socialism and violence was widely debated. This perturbed many socialists. Indeed, the first major implementation of the policy of non co-operation with anarchism can be dated from her visit. Dreading the effects on the image of the nascent socialist movement, neither the SDF nor the Fabian Society took any official part in the joint commemoration of the Chicago execution and Bloody Sunday at which Mrs. Parsons was to be the guest speaker. Annie Besant, whose name was mistakenly advertised as a speaker, availed herself of the opportunity to shower attacks on the anarchists and dissociated herself from them. Alluding to the possibility that the throwing of the bomb in Chicago might have been a police plot "aiming at the destruction of the leaders of the socialist party", Besant cautioned that Lucy Parsons's words could be used by foes of the cause - and thus bring about a replay of Chicago in Britain[2].

That "Mrs. Parsons's meetings and the comments on her speeches, as well as upon Anarchism generally" at once had a moderating effect on the thinking of the SDF is clear from Justice's pronouncements[3]. The unequivocal lesson it derived from the visit was that prudence was imperative and that all advocacy of individual violence had to be stopped,

1. The Commonweal, 24 Nov. 1888.
2. The Link, 24 Nov. 1888.
3. Justice, 8 Dec. 1888.

as such talk only gave a lever to the enemies of socialism[1]. Although Justice held that true social freedom "may have to be won on the battlefield and in the market-place", hope was expressed for a peaceful solution "when the bitter class war of to-day comes to a crisis". It was explained that individual assassinations and dynamite ventures were means to which the anarchists were bound to resort for lack of better methods, if they were to "upset the present capitalist system". No effort was spared to transmit to the public the shift of emphasis to peaceful means.

Lucy Parsons's visit signalled a turning point in the development of the SDF. This body would always hold firmly to the principle of the class struggle and never lose sight of its revolutionary aim. Yet from then on, under the guiding spirit of Hyndman, political action became gradually a synonym for revolutionary means, and the less militant implications of Marx's deterministic approach were more emphatically developed. The SDF was resolved to wait patiently for the ripe historical circumstances to create the conditions for the final blow to the capitalist system, meanwhile organising and preparing the proletariat for the right revolutionary moment by teaching them the basic tenets of marxism and advancing their cause through parliament. From time to time lip service was paid to revolutionism and the possible need to resort to force in the final struggle, but such expressions were generally restrained[2].

The practice of keeping a safe distance from the anarchists which had started in the late 1880s became entrenched in the 1890s, and ran parallel with the consolidation of the violent image of anarchism. The effect of this image on the progress of anarchism was crushing. At the beginning of the '90s anarchists were still occasionally asked to speak in a socialist society or a radical club, but such invitations diminished and the close ties with other socialist groups weakened. Except for the company of individual

1. Ibid., also 1 Dec. 1888.
2. See for instance Justice, 24 Feb. 1894.

sympathisers and the odd joint demonstration or protest, the anarchists found themselves gradually working in isolation, sharing fewer and fewer platforms with other socialist groups, and contrary to the practice of the '80s, commemorating the Paris Commune and the Chicago execution by themselves. Only rarely would May Day be celebrated jointly.

Lest they suffer from the prevailing mood of anti-anarchist hysteria, branches of the SDF, Independent Labour Party and the Labour Church refused to let their halls for anarchist meetings[1]. This was a heavy blow as the anarchists, especially after the closure of the Jewish Berner Street Club in 1892 and the German Autonomie Club in 1894, had hardly any meeting places of their own. In 1894 the London anarchists could not commemorate the execution of the Chicago anarchists in one big meeting, having failed to book a large hall[2]. Not only was anarchism less and less acknowledged as an integral component of the labour movement, but close associates, such as Morris, Walter Crane, Carpenter and Auberon Herbert, made any support dependent upon open anarchist disavowal of violent tactics.

Moreover, some bodies felt the need to divorce themselves publicly and unequivocally from anarchism. The Hammersmith Socialist Society, given the long association of its members with anarchists, was naturally anxious to avoid identification with anarchism soon after its withdrawal from the S.L.[3] But, equally, the signatories to the manifesto of the short-lived Joint Committee of Socialist Bodies - the product of an attempt in July 1893 at unity between the SDF, the Fabian Society and the Hammersmith Socialist Society - hurried to make known their total repudiation of anarchist doctrines and tactics, and sought

1. Freedom, Oct. 1894 and The Commonweal, 20 Jan. 1894.
2. Freedom, Nov. - Dec. 1893.
3. Statement of Principles of the Hammersmith Socialist Society, p. 5.

to pose anarchism as antithetical to socialism[1]. The socialist press was also strewn with such refutations which spilt over into meetings[2].

The consequence that anarchists had to suffer was virtual political impotence. Not only were they largely deprived of access to fora where they could exert at least some influence, but their potentially favourable public was constantly furnished with negative views on anarchism. Anarchist moves towards rapprochement went unanswered; resolutions at anarchist conferences to the effect that they should try their best not to alienate "other socialist bodies" and "to fight common revolutionary battles together" found no response[3].

The uneasy relationship between the anarchists and the SDF was to hasten the severance of anarchism from the rest of the socialist movement as well as to devalue the doctrine as a valid revolutionary creed and potential revolutionary force. The anarchists were political opponents and critics of almost every sect in the British labour movement, but none of them reacted to anarchism as intensely as the SDF. This body displayed an unprecedented resentful preoccupation with anarchism which lasted even when the topic no longer figured prominently in socialist circles, and which, in so far as can be accurately estimated, was not so forcefully reciprocated by the anarchists. The SDF's leaders discussed the topic at great length in lectures and debates. Justice alone among the socialist papers was for a long time engrossed in the publication of scores of articles refuting the doctrine and attacking its promoters. These pronounce-

1. Manifesto of the Joint Committee of Socialist Bodies (London, 1893), p. 5. Twenty years later Morris's daughter wrote to Shaw that as far as she knew, her father had had little to do with the drafting of the manifesto. "The pious reputation of Anarchism is very lame: God knows who drafted the original! The pamphlet is all over scraps of Hyndman" she added. (Letter from May Morris to Bernard Shaw, 14 April 1913. [B.M. ADD. MS. 50541]).
2. For Eleanor Aveling's words to this effect in a Fabian meeting in Scotland see Freedom, April 1893.
3. See conference report in The Commonweal, 6 Jan. 1894.

ments were often voiced in a strident style that betrayed the near obsession under the surface.

The discord between the British anarchists and marxists was in the continuing tradition of theoretical and personal warfare between Marx and his followers on the one hand and Proudhon and later Bakunin and their followers on the other. However, its specific twists and turns were not merely predetermined, but also much inspired by the nature of each indigenous faction and the course of the interaction between them.

Their competitiveness and the emotional level at which both sides conducted the war can be explained by their common revolutionary starting points and their aims which rendered the two movements potentially appealing to the same audience, and by the related intolerance of both to divergent views and ideological deviation in their midst. The experience of the SDF with anarchism in the first, and hence most sensitive decade of its existence, further disposed its die-hards towards a personal, as well as an ideological vendetta against the representatives of the rival creed.

The break-up of the SDF in the winter of 1884 reinforced the impression from the precedent of the historical cleavage in the First International and from contemporary internecine strife in socialist parties abroad, that the anarchists were "subversionists" and "a divisive force" as Marx and Engels had described them[1], and that the SDF should be careful of their explosive power. Above all, the split left an indelible mark on Hyndman. "It was the saddest episode in the entire course of my Socialist career" he admitted[2]; an intolerable blow to a man who had aspired to lead a united socialist party into victory. As one who had already in the early '80s manifested a distaste for anarchism, he would never forgive them and made a point of defaming them whenever possible. His pronouncements on

1. For a compilation of Marx's and Engels's views on anarchism see Marx, Engels, Lenin, Anarchism and Anarcho-Syndicalism (Moscow, 1972).
2. H.M. Hyndman, The Record of an Adventurous Life (London, 1911) p. 360.

anarchism manifested a combination of austere doctrinalism and unscrupulous personal bias.

Overtones of Hyndman's feelings can be best discerned in his memoirs, The Record of an Adventurous Life and Further Reminiscences, and in many of his other writings and utterances. Time and again he chose the word 'anarchy' to describe disorder and capitalist chaos. In a related manner, the equation of anarchism with the ideology of capitalism was especially favoured by this ex-Tory who reserved an irreconcilable hatred for the Liberal party. He drew attention to the fact that there was "a close community of sentiment and method between Anarchists and Liberals", and then made the unrealistic leap and declared that they were so close that "Anarchist after Anarchist ... turns Liberal"[1]. In the same breath, anarchism was identified with propaganda by deed and depicted as composed of police agents and criminals. It was to him a "plague" and its promoters "opponents of everyone and everything"[2]. Kropotkin alone enjoyed the esteem of Hyndman and Justice, although at the same time he was attacked for being "wayward as a boy and as illogical as a woman"[3]. With Hyndman as leader, the SDF policy towards anarchism naturally reflected his prejudices.

What followed the split seemed to provide further proof of the disruptive quality of the anarchists. The next few years witnessed the expansion of the anarchist denomination and its consolidation into fully-fledged organised groups. The S.L. itself increasingly showed an anarchist bent. Members of the SDF were drawn to anarchist and S.L. meetings and discussions, and sought to find out more about anarchism or to clarify points of dissention through letters to anarchist papers and centres of propaganda.

Defections from the SDF to anarchist groups were not

1. Ibid., p. 265.
2. H.M. Hyndman, Further Reminiscences (London, 1912), p. 107, et passim.
3. Justice, 19 March 1904. For Hyndman's feelings towards Kropotkin see The Record, p. 262.

uncommon in the latter part of the '80s. James Blackwell and Alfred Marsh, both to be editors of Freedom, deserted the ranks of the SDF. And if not wholly persuaded by anarchist arguments, members still expressed open resentment at the negative official policy of the Federation to the anarchists. Some members, such as John Burns, disregarded the official decision not to participate in meetings held to welcome Lucy Parsons, and the Bermondsey branch of the SDF passed a resolution expressing regrets "that most of the prominent members of the Federation seem to have practically boycotted the noble wife of the heroic Anarchist Parsons" and utterly deprecating Justice for confounding "the Anarchism of the present system with the nobel cause for which Parsons and his brave comrades have died, and for which some of them are now suffering imprisonment"[1]. The resolution also stated that Justice's view was not shared" by Social Democrats generally".

Secessions continued in the first half of the '90s, though at a slower pace: "splits occurred in three or four branches ... notably at Canning Town, Deptford and Peckham. Some of the members who either resigned or were expelled ... constituted themselves into local Anarchist 'groups'"[2]. Individuals also changed affiliation of their own accord[3]. Anarchists like Creaghe in Sheffield or Kelly in South Salford engaged in infiltration of the SDF by joining its groups. Justice complained that the few comrades who "have gone over to the Anarchists, have decided to stay inside the Federation with the intention, if possible, of turning the organisation away from the paths of Social-Democracy"[4]. In some of the provinces, social democrats and anarchists collaborated closely and jointly embarked on new initiatives[5]. That there was among the younger SDF members "a vague sort of idea that Anarchism is something

1. The Commonweal, 8 Dec. 1888.
2. Hart, p. 194.
3. See letters from R. Peddie (4 April 1894) and Arthur Thomlinson (4 April 1894) to Presburg. [Presburg Archive, N.C.].
4. Justice, 21 June 1890.
5. See letter from Mainwaring to Nettlau, 14 Dec. 1893. [N.C.].

fine and revolutionary" was confirmed by Eleanor Marx-Aveling, herself a militant opponent of anarchism in line with the family tradition[1].

By the early 1890s it had become quite evident to the SDF that anarchism was not a serious political alternative, and therefore could not be the cause of a major schism on the scale of 1884[2]. Yet the SDF's officials continued to be sensitive to any sympathy to anarchism in the Federation and perturbed by the anarchists' gift for persistent irritation, however harmless they were insofar as the dominant tenets and organisational integrity of the SDF were concerned. Even if only a nuisance, the actions taken by the anarchists still undermined the deep desires for ideological harmony and flawless performance.

Partly as an attempt to weed out any anarchist influence in the Federation, the leadership throughout the '90s bombarded its supporters with massive anti-anarchist propaganda which was steadily gaining in crusading ardour. The denunciations by Kropotkin and many other anarchists of propaganda by deed were sarcastically welcomed: "Cannot they afford to 'despise public opinion' and to 'hate the present social ethics in all their motives and manifestations'", Justice taunted[3]. "Then they haven't risen to the high level of Anarchism which Ravachol has attained, and had better publicly confess that they have given up their theories". To prove that there was no connection between anarchism and social democracy and that they were "directly antagonistic to each other" became a vital and not necessarily unpleasant concern[4]. Voices inveighed against anarchism not only for triggering reaction, intensifying the prejudice against socialism and increasing respect for law and order, but also for being itself a reactionary force halting the advance of socialism: "tyranny begets Anarchism and Anarchism aids, abets and excuses tyranny"

1. Aveling, Eleanor Marx, introd. Anarchism and Socialism by George Plechanoff. (Chicago, 1908), p. 4. (First published in 1895).
2. Justice, 1 April 1893.
3. Ibid., 16 April 1892.
4. Ibid., 13 May 1893.

Quelch contended[1].

In addition to the dissemination of highly antagonistic literature, the policy makers of the SDF tried to maintain minimal contact with anarchist-inspired cadres; they not only drastically reduced formal collaboration from the early '90s, but also set their minds on putting an end to fraternisation at grass-roots level. Justice openly advised members to keep themselves "distinctly apart"[2] and "to disavow all connection with Anarchism"[3]. It was explained that the presence of the anarchists and "their actions inside the body can only lead to that strife and disintegration which ... seems to be the ideal of a certain section of the Anarchists"[4]. At the beginning of 1894 the General Council of the SDF published a circular in which it recommended members not to hold debates with anarchists, though "not a week has passed without a lecture on Anarchism by one or other of the speakers of the SDF"[5]. The lecturers, however, turned a deaf ear to arguments in favour of anarchism and forbade the members to discuss the issue on the ground that their talks were lectures and not debates. Anarchists were expelled from SDF clubs and groups and debarred from meetings[6]. The South Salford SDF club went as far as asking its secretary to write and inform the Chief Constable of Manchester of its decision to expel Kelly and advised him to keep an eye on him as a "dangerous anarchist"[7].

The almost daily impact of anarchist excesses overseas on the public mind at home, no doubt strengthened the determination to shun any association with extreme politics. As the SDF was seen as a revolutionary socialist force, it was susceptible to the effects of the damaging image. As they now appeared, the anarchists threatened yet again and on a grander scale, to estrange the SDF from its potential followers. Before the impact of anarchist involvement with

1. Ibid., 21 July 1894.
2. Ibid., 21 June 1890.
3. Ibid., 9 May 1891.
4. Ibid., 21 June 1890.
5. Liberty, April 1894.
6. The Anarchist (Sheffield), 20 Jan. 1895.
7. The Torch, Aug. 1894.

conspiratorial means had fully registered, the official mouthpiece of the SDF reserved some words of sympathy for the anarchists[1], and felt it was important to argue convincingly that it "treated the Anarchists with the utmost fairness"[2]. Its systematic and persistent rejection of anarchism as a possible spiritual or political ally gained momentum as the image became stronger. Justice now gave high priority to directing its words to those readers who needed to be convinced that "The apostles of the bomb and the dagger are among our worst enemies"[3]. It emphasised that the paper never failed to denounce their futility, and perhaps most important of all, that the social democrats were doing their best to avoid the danger of a clash between the old and new society[4]. Justice's leading contributors were clearly very relieved to notice that "the majority of the press have not confused Anarchism with Socialism"[5]. The secretary of the Federation, W.H. Lee, frankly admitted that the SDF, the organiser of May Day demonstration in 1894, refused to accept co-operation with the Commonweal Group on the grounds that it would be "the worst policy for the SDF to be in any way identified with Anarchism"[6].

It is, however, equally apparent that the anarchist image itself furnished the SDF with a convenient justification for blackening anarchism further and holding anarchists at arm's length. Anarchist incidents were repeatedly used not only to dissociate the SDF publicly from anarchism but also to undermine its ideological position. Doctrinal attacks were not the only form of assault. By constantly juxtaposing anarchism and violent tactics, the SDF contributed to the entrenchment of the popular image. In fact, the SDF's treatment of the anarchists was worse not only than that meted out by the moderate left-wing press but also worse than that of the radical press. Whereas a few socialist and radical journals attested that anarchism accommo-

1.- See Justice, 14 May 1892.
2. Ibid., 30 April 1892.
3. Ibid., 21 July 1894.
4. Ibid., 24 Feb. 1894.
5. Ibid., 16 Dec. 1893.
6. Ibid., 28 April 1894.

dated diversified prescriptions, put forward extenuating circumstances to excuse the terrorist acts performed by anarchists and gave them some access to their pages to rebut the stereotype makers, Justice usually steeled itself against such practices, and in the few odd cases when the editor relented, any favourable reference to anarchism was followed by a damaging charge[1]. The overall attitude of the SDF revealed a deep-seated animosity, the effect of which accounted, to a certain extent, for the political isolation of the anarchists.

Yet the isolation of the anarchists was by no means total. Some of the sympathy still lingered on. Individuals such as Carpenter, Morris and Shaw contributed money to the anarchist cause, and came to the defence of anarchists in the series of trials in the early and mid '90s. Socialists from those bodies to which anarchism's most volatile enemies adhered, still occasionally spoke at anarchist meetings and wrote to their papers. Nor did the parting of the ways invariably involve an antagonistic attitude to the philosophy itself. Anarchist texts circulated widely leaving a trail of sympathy. Kropotkin's writings in particular were cited as formative inspirations in the memoirs of many labour leaders. As revealed earlier sympathy lingered among the SDF's rank and file, and interest in lectures about anarchism continued in the Fabian Society in the early '90s. The Fabian, Mrs. Carr, lent a hand in Louise Michel's International School[3]. The writings of Kropotkin, Davidson, Wilde, Tolstoy and various anarchist pamphlets were the Society's recommended reading material[4]. The Clarion, the most popular socialist paper in the country, also took a fraternal attitude to anarchism, even if at the same time advocating the "formation of one great united socialist party"[5]. Its editor, Robert Blatchford, was inspired by the vision of Morris and

1. See for instance ibid., 3 June 1893.
2. See Freedom, March 1893.
3. The Commonweal, April 1891.
4. What to Read. Fabian Tract No. 29, 1891, 1901 Editions. See also Tract No. 132.
5. The Clarion, 17 Nov. 1894.

Kropotkin, although he did not believe "that the ideal of the Anarchist could be realised"[1]. The official denunciations of anarchism in themselves revealed that the creed was still a powerful doctrinal force.

The 1890s introduced a new organisational element to the political arena, the long hoped for Independent Labour Party. Though the proposed unity of the left did not materialise within this enterprise, the ILP became a mass workers' party, unequalled by any other socialist organisation. Its creation in January 1893 in Bradford marked the further estrangement of Labour from anarchist thinking. For the ILP, as its name suggests, hope lay in the independent representation of Labour in parliament, backed up by the organised forces of labour outside. This hope and the pervading recognition that the struggle would be long and gradual and that victory would be the product of the accumulation of reform and institutional concessions were incompatible with the aims and expectations of anarchism. Indeed, the anarchists were not invited to the inaugural conference which embraced almost all the socialist-inspired groups: representatives of the Scottish Labour Party, the SDF, the Fabian Society and other small socialist societies, as well as delegates from trade unions and trade councils.

However, the largely undogmatic ILP did furnish a terrain for token anarchist sympathies. For the teachers of ethical and humanitarian socialism that populated the ILP the appeal of anarchism lay in its anti-authoritarianism and anti-conventional bearing, in its high morality, emphasis on personal improvement and the elevation of personal and social freedom. The utopias, as formulated by Morris and Kropotkin, were a seminal inspiration to the visionaries in this party. In addition, there was some sympathy for the policy of industrial struggle and the general strike, at least as a way of attaining the eight-hour working day. Many of the active members had had their political grounding in the S.L. or at least had held views akin to those of communist-anarchism during the '80s and

1. Ibid., 30 May 1896. For the similarity of views see Laurence Thompson, Robert Blatchford (London, 1951) pp. 92, 102- 13.

some of them remembered their youthful impulses with warmth.

Conflicting attitudes to anarchism - both positive and negative - came to the fore during the official discussions of the ILP at which the best course of action to adopt towards the anarchists was examined. At the party's second annual congress in Manchester in February 1894, an attempt was made to pass a resolution stating that the ILP had no connection with the anarchists. It was defeated. At the next meeting of the National Administrative Council (NAC) such a resolution was passed only to be deleted from the NAC report by an almost unanimous vote at the following party congress in Newcastle in 1895[1].

That Keir Hardie exhibited sentiments strongly favourable to anarchism must have had a great impact on the ILP's attitude as a whole and on individual members, as he was the ILP's undisputed leader, its president and then chairman. He was also the owner and editor of The Labour Leader, the party's only mouthpiece until 1897 when the ILP News (edited by Bruce Glasier) was launched. Thus a diametrically opposed situation to that in the SDF existed in the ILP with corresponding opposite consequences.

A firm believer in freedom of expression, Hardie had already opened the columns of The Miner, which he edited in 1887-88, to anarchism and other socialist strands. He was to do the same at The Labour Leader[2]. Yet anarchism was for him more than a cause to present or defend. To ponder on anarchist ideas was for him an emotional luxury, expressing an eagerness for an ideal world, perfect and magnetic, though hardly credible in the dreary and strenuous everyday environment in which he operated. It is possible that for the evangelical and poetically-minded Hardie anarchism was, even if briefly, a secular religion, a craving for redemption and the enactment of God's Kingdom upon earth. It could also have been the materialisation

1. The Labour Leader, 15 Aug. 1896.
2. See for instance ibid., March/April 1895.

of a truly happy rural society as envisaged by Kropotkin and the Christian-anarchists for whom he felt a romantic affection. Both Kropotkin and J.C. Kenworthy were his personal friends, and he held the former in great admiration: Hardie strongly recommended his writings as essential reading[1], and said:"'Were we all Kropotkins ... Anarchism would be the only possible system, since government and restraint would be unnecessary'"[2]. But in the absence of a multitude of Kropotkins he concluded that there should be an intermediate stage between the period of commercialism and free communism, as he preferred to call communist-anarchism[3].

Parliamentarianism, for Hardie, was too important a weapon to relinquish. It was the best possible forum in which to solve industrial problems and the plight of the poor and the deprived. A greater danger lay in replacing the ballot by strikes[4]. Yet he also recognised its weaknesses. In the middle '90s, as his assistant editor from 1894 to 1906 was to record, he actually let the "idea of anti-Parliamentarianism play about in his mind"[5]. Otherwise, anarchist abstentionism was for him simply a tactical blunder[6]. Even if in a whimsical and momentary mood, Hardie concurrently advocated direct action methods: "he advised the unemployed to steal food and to engage in 'harmless' attacks on property, such as the smashing of street lamps"[7]. At about the same time, he declared that "Whilst he believed in political action he had sense enough to recognise that he might be wrong and the Anarchists right in their policy"[8], and admitted "much of what they say to be true"[9].

Hardie was in the forefront of those socialists who felt compelled to defend anarchism against the slanders

1. Ibid., 21 March 1896.
2. William Stewart, Keir Hardie (London, 1921), p. 122.
3. The Labour Leader, 10 July 1897.
4. Ibid., 22 Feb. 1896.
5. David Lowe, From Pit to Parliament (London, 1923), p. 79.
6. The Labour Leader, 15 Aug. 1896.
7. Fred Reid, Keir Hardie (London, 1978), p. 162.
8. Justice, 29 July 1896.
9. The Labour Leader, 15 Aug. 1896.

that had been poured on it. "Probably no body of men are more misunderstood than the Anarchists", a Labour Leader editorial pointed out[1]. If the "popular idea is that they are a horde of crime-stained wretches, who make Anarchism their excuse for preying on society", in reality most of them, he affirmed, were "men of fine feelings" driven to anarchism by their very moral sensibility.

When Tom Mann, a prominent trade union organiser and from 1894 the secretary of the ILP, confessed that "his sympathies were strongly disposed towards the Communist-Anarchists and the Unparliamentary Socialists" he was talking with deep conviction and not from sentimental craving[2]; and he made his views public at meetings and lectures. His sympathy with anarchism strengthened the favourable attitude in the ILP. Like Hardie he wished the labour movement to rise above sectarian principles, but his unsolicited defence of anarchism stemmed primarily from a preference for extra-parliamentary activity over legislative efforts. In the 1890s he frowned upon parliamentarianism but did not yet discard it altogether. In 1897 he left the ILP to spend most of his time organising workers. His economism progressed a step further.

The administrative positions of both Hardie and Mann could have obscured much of the ongoing internal resentment to anarchism or fear of contamination from it. But for all the cases of overt antagonism to anarchism, the anarchists themselves admitted that the ILP was much more tolerant towards them than the SDF or Fabian Society[3]. This remained true also years later[4].

It is apparent that anarchism was an intriguing phenomenon, capable of evoking complex and often extreme reactions. Many who had participated in anarchist activities, especially during the sanguine '80s, whether leaders of labour thought or rank and file, either preserved a

1. Ibid., 11 Aug. 1894.
2. Justice, 29 July, 1896. Also Freedom, May 1896.
3. The Anarchist (Sheffield), 20 Jan. 1895 and Freedom, May 1896.
4. The Anarchist (Glasgow), 3 May 1912.

particular affection for anarchist ideas - although they thought them naïve or too far in advance of human preparedness - or continued to harbour a resentment to anarchism. Apart from ideological and pragmatic decisions, the predisposition of individuals, their own personal preferences and interests in anarchism also left their imprint on the way anarchism was treated. The events surrounding the London Congress of the Second International (1896) can best illustrate this point.

That the newly-created International would opt for parliamentary activity and social legislation had already been foreshadowed by the resolutions passed at the previous congresses in 1889, 1891 and 1893. The sponsors of this strategy, the marxists, were resolved to keep the trend alive. Evidently they considered the exclusion of the troublesome anarchists from international gatherings an advisable means to this end. An unsuccessful attempt was made to prevent the admission of anarchists to the congress in Brussels in 1891. At the next congress, in Zurich in 1893, a standing order for the following congress in London was adopted stating that only trade unions and the socialist parties and organisations "which recognise the necessity of the organisation of the workers and of political action" would be admitted[1].

This decision excited fierce opposition from anarchists all over the world and from sympathisers who supported the parliamentary way but resented the operative implications of the resolution. As the London Congress approached, tension rose. Those who had demonstrated a conspicuous hostility to anarchism stood at the head of the camp opposing any change in the standing order, while those who spoke on behalf of the anarchists had also previously been well disposed towards them. The determination and the tone with which each side defended its attitude reflected much of the personal bias. The British ranks, divided in their opinions which cut across party lines and individual groups, were in a favourable position to influence the direction of events

1. The Labour Leader, 1 Aug. 1896.

as the Congress was to take place on their home territory.

Several of the known objectors to anarchism - Harry Quelch of the S D F, James Macdonald of the ILP and Edward Aveling - were members of the Committee which dealt with matters affecting the Congress, from which anarchists were absent. This committee rejected the applications for admission by the Freedom Group, the London German anarchists, the Jewish Arbeter Fraint Group, the Brotherhood Church and Henry Seymour. As against this, The Labour Leader, The Clarion and Bernard Shaw, among others, tried to counteract the moves of the anti-anarchists and pre-empt the exclusion of the anarchists from the Congress. Before the Congress, The Labour Leader was replete with articles and letters arguing for both sides, most of them, however, called for the admission of the anarchists. Shaw demanded the exercise of reason, though at the same time he asked the anarchists to be more orderly at meetings and to let delegates speak their mind[1].

The polemic assumed renewed vigour with the start of the Congress. The anarchists demanded a reopening of the debate. The loophole was standing order number eleven decided upon in Zürich. This clause provided that no amendment to the standing orders should be accepted or discussed after the first day of the Congress. On Monday, 27 July 1896, therefore, the verdict could still be changed. The ILP meeting held on the night before the first session endorsed the decision to rediscuss the question of admission at the Congress. Hardie and Mann also managed to secure two speeches of ten minutes for each side. Having failed to forestall any discussion, the SDF, the Avelings and others, backed by that relentless enemy of anarchism, the German SPD, were intent upon rushing it through in order to secure the victory of the Zürich resolution. The weight of the 118 strong SDF delegation, out of about 475 British representatives and a total of 800 participants, promised well for the anti-anarchist camp. The ILP, though much bigger, had 112 representatives. The British trade unions

1. Liberty, June 1896.

had 177, the Fabians 22 and there were a small number of others. But the SDF and the Fabian delegations were almost united in their opposition to anarchist participation, and the divisions within the ILP undermined its prospects of getting its leaders' way.

At the meeting of the British section on the first morning of the Congress, not attended by all the delegates, Shaw Maxwell (ILP) proposed support for the Zürich resolution. Tom Mann strongly opposed it. The voting was 223 for and 104 against the resolution. It was agreed that the vote on paragraph eleven should be the first business on the agenda. In the event, this did not transpire. The chairman had to adjourn the first day's meeting following a French protest against the clause, to which the anarchists in the gallery enthusiastically added their voice.

On the second day (28 July) Hardie, as British vice-chairman, addressed the Congress calling for toleration and fraternity. Mann was one of the two who undertook to speak against the resolution. In a fiery and vehement speech he urged the audience to be tolerant and admit the anarchists who "had done and suffered much in the cause of the workers" and worked "for the reformation of society"[1]. The anarchists differed only in their methods but not in aim, he asserted. Then Hyndman rose to speak on behalf of the other side. Faithful to the memory of his experience, he evoked the opposition he had suffered from the anarchists in the early days, and went on to set forth his chief grudge against them: "Anarchists had no scruple about breaking up any meeting when it did not go their way" and "were absolutely opposed to every method on which the Social Democrat wanted to work". Forebearance was not an ultimate value for him. Justice reiterated his attitude: "Tolerance is fatal to Social Democray in its present phase"[2].

To the further disadvantage of the anarchists, the speech of Domela Nieuwenhuis - the Dutch anarchist and the second to speak on the anarchist side - was translated into

1. The Labour Leader, 1 Aug. 1896.
2. Justice, 31 July 1896.

English by Eleanor Marx who, as The Labour Leader noticed "cut it down with every indication of contempt. It was generally felt that she acted all through with a very impertinent partisanship"[1]. It was decided to take the vote on the question by nationalities. The chairman James Mawdsley, a Conservative trade unionist, declared that Britain was bound by the vote taken the day before. Mann objected, hoping to change the vote, but the chairman ruled him out of order. The wide support for the anarchists within the ILP was thus overwhelmed by the voting method adopted. Eighteen nationalities voted for, two - France and Holland - against, Italy was equally divided and Serbia abstained. The eighteen included Dr. Aveling who claimed to represent Australia. The anarchists were from then on debarred from sending delegates to the International Congresses unless they appeared as representatives of trade unions. Not having been elected to represent such bodies, the British anarchists were denied this privilege and would never enjoy it in the future. The isolation of the anarchists was thus institutionalised.

The controversy did not abate quickly however. During the Congress and for more than a month afterwards, the issue was taken up as a cause célèbre right across the spectrum of the left. The artist Walter Crane of the SDF and Morris who was too ill to attend, each sent a letter of sympathy to the meeting which had been arranged to welcome the anarchists on the eve of the second day of the Congress. In a letter to the anarchist congress, Blatchford stated in his own name and that of the other Clarion men that the anarchists had not been fairly treated and that thereby the Congress had lost "many of the best Socialists in Europe"[2].

Hardie continued to express his strong resentment of what had happened. His ruling passion was to achieve a fair play for the minority[3]. And this minority, the anarchists, with their aim of the amelioration of society - was composed of good and worthy fellow-socialists. For him

1. The Labour Leader, 1 Aug. 1896.
2. Liberty, Aug. 1896.
3. The Labour Leader, 1 Aug. 1896.

the discrepancy of opinion between the anarchists and the parliamentarians was much more apparent than real, and in any case occurred only on the question of method or control which should not be allowed to inhibit the free communication of ideas. "Among both parties there is a section which puts its faith in the barricade" he emphasised[1]: if methods were sufficient reason to be ousted from the Congress, then both of them should have been excluded; and he and many others on the floor of the Trades Congress should have been treated likewise in the early fight for socialism, for they held similar views to the anarchists, he reminded the veteran socialists. He was convinced that what propelled the state socialist parties had nothing to do with principles, and that the clash was a matter of personal antagonism, "the wire-pulling and intrigue" especially of "the German Section and their London allies"[2].

The ILP was not in complete accord on this question. In fact, the anarchist issue caused much dissension in it. Justice published a letter signed by eighteen ILP members, among them Joseph Burgess, Shaw Maxwell, J.R. Macdonald, Anid Stacy and E. Aveling, in which they wished to make known "that the attitude and speeches of Keir Hardie and Tom Mann ... are in no sense official as representing the general policy of the Independent Labour Party" and that the question had not been properly discussed in the branches[3]. Seven other members of the ILP, including the former editor of The Commonweal, H. Samuels, also endorsed the ILP protest against Hardie's and Mann's action. Through the columns of The Labour Leader too, the two were reproached for going as far as embracing the anarchists as friends or for appearing "as their advocates on their platforms", and were even charged with being anarchists in disguise[4]. A number of people within the ILP took the same views as the SDF that the argument that the Congress should welcome all who were prepared to work for the reformation

1. Ibid., 15 Aug. 1896.
2. Ibid.,1 Aug. 1896.
3. Justice, 29 July 1896.
4. The Labour Leader, 8 Aug. 1896.

of society would hold true for the Salvation Army and even the Primrose League[1], and that what the anarchists wanted was to "thwart the strivings of the parliamentarians" and "to raise unending and futile dissentions"[2].

Conversely, there was some unease within the SDF about its official performance. J. Hunter Watts, one of the old guard, led the opposition[3]. He participated in the parallel anarchist congress with some other members of the SDF, but was the only one of the SDF to leave the hall at the moment of exclusion. To prove his earnestness he extended the hospitality of his home to the anarchists throughout the week of the Congress.

The opponents of anarchism achieved their objective, yet not without a fierce trial of strength between them and the friends of anarchism. The balance of power threw into stark relief the status of the anarchists in the British labour movement of the mid '90s as well as that of anarchism everywhere. In the aftermath of the Congress, anarchist links with all the labour sections were even more tenuous than before, and were reduced to a few protests at the oppressive or discriminatory treatment of anarchists abroad or in Britain. Anarchism thus lacked a forum and was on the brink of political oblivion. Its principles no longer served as a point of reference and the mention of anarchism, even in negative contexts, became more infrequent. Anarchism gradually became a dead issue even in the columns of Justice which for a period after the Congress had been greatly preoccupied with the subject[4]. Upon the release of the Walsall anarchists in the summer of 1899, the SDF tried to get other bodies to join it in organising a relief fund but found that "Anarchists are out of fashion just now and these other bodies are not eager to concern themselves about infamously-wronged men"[5].

1. Ibid., 1 Aug. 1896.
2. Ibid., 29 Aug. 1896.
3. Lee maintained that Watts was "anarchistic in temperament" and a social democrat intellectually. Lee, p. 86.
4. For a few examples see Justice 22 Aug.; 19 Sept.; 26 Dec. 1896; 2 Jan. 1897; 15/22 Jan. 1898.
5. Justice, 2 Sept. 1899.

The loss of impetus was not confined to the anarchist movement. Other socialist bodies also experienced a period of stagnation in the decade after the Congress, although it was not so devastating. In any case, the currents of parliamentary democracy whose predominance had previously been unmistakable, were constantly gaining further momentum in the labour movement. The trade unions were now also making the hoped-for advance towards collectivism with firmer support for political action through an independent labour party. On 27 February 1900 the Labour Representation Committee (LRC) was inaugurated, gathering socialist societies and trade unions under its wings with this aim in view. After the Taff Vale decision - which imposed damages incurred during a strike on the unions - the trade unions evinced even stronger willingness to bank on labour representation. In the General Election of 1906, the LRC - renamed the Labour Party - won 29 seats alongside 24 trade unionists in the Liberal Party. But from around the same time this tide slowed down. New winds began to blow spreading views akin to anarchism. In the early years of the century the newly-circulating notions had been the monopoly of a handful of highly-motivated individual explorers, mostly workers who alongside the anarchists had been attuned to the new trends on the industrial front in France and the U.S.A. In the course of the first decade of the century these ideas spread and forced a passage into political strongholds, and for a few years before the Great War they became almost commonplace.

What led to an extensive reassessment of aims and interests and subsequently to some modifications of purpose across the spectrum of the labour movement was a combination of worsening economic conditions and disillusionment with the functioning of the state and party politics in general[1]. Real wages were falling and unemployment grew, while the employers' self-confidence steadily increased as did henceforth their obduracy in the face of demands. The

1. For such feelings see Tom Bell, Pioneering Days (London, 1941) p. 33.

focus on the political arena did not seem to hold much hope of stemming let alone reversing the tide. The Liberal Party, returning to power in 1906, enacted some measure of social legislation, but did not bring the workers nearer to a dramatic amelioration of their working and living conditions. The Labour Party, too, appeared hopelessly inadequate to tackle the situation. Impelled by the pressure from the practical-minded and reformist trade unions and its own moderate activists, the leadership of the party inclined towards avoiding an explicit socialist formulation of aims, preferring to stress the need to maximise immediate economic returns, but in reality it was hardly instrumental in bringing them about. Its poor performance in Parliament increased the growing disillusionment with it and with parliamentarianism.

It was syndicalism in its various guises in France, Spain, Australia, the U.S.A. and Britain which emerged as the principal rival ideology to orthodox socialism. Syndicalism was not a coherent and definitive ideology; nor was it in any way a predominant influence on the labour movement, which largely continued on its traditional path. But combinations of syndicalist tendencies inhered to varying degrees in virtually every socialist body and featured prominently in a plethora of old and new publications. Syndicalist ideas were also alive in non-socialist circles and from about 1910 could be seen in the behaviour and tone of the industrial forces[1].

In a reaction to existing circumstances and under syndicalism's overriding seminal inspiration, the champions of the new mood shifted the stress from the political arena to the industrial sphere and from gradual reforms to revolutionary methods and drastic structural changes. The kinds of activity encourages by them were extra-parliamentary, suggesting as an alternative direct militant action,

1. For a thorough analysis of British syndicalism see E. Burdick, "Syndicalism and Industrial Unionism in Britain until 1918", Unpublished Ph.D. Diss. Oxford 1950.

especially by organised labour. The goals, too, changed direction and became largely anti-statist or anti-centralist, inaugurating a vision of industrial self-management. These notions were inextricably bound up with widespread criticism of the drift of the Labour Party and trade union officials towards careerism and opportunism, and thus with anti-bureaucratic and anti-authoritarian principles. Conciliatory trade union policies were discarded and the class struggle affirmed. The guiding role of the rank and file was strongly emphasised. The overall mood underlying these concepts was that of revolt, not only against present conditions, but also against the political fabric and conventional patterns of thought.

It was not as if all these sentiments were widely current in a consolidated form; nor did they invariably take an extreme direction. Nonetheless, sweeping through Britain and showing a far-reaching departure from the former consensus of labour, the new concepts provided a natural terrain for the revival of slumbering anarchism. After all, anarchism constituted a formative inspiration on syndicalist thinking and many of its adherents were the forerunners of the syndicalist movement in Britain as well as elsewhere. Consequently, indigenous anarchism saw a partial recovery of its former vitality. Its manpower was augmented and new journals and groups were set up. Some of the new recruits came from the most improbable places. Guy Aldred came from the SDF and John Paton from the ILP. The latter was roused by Kropotkin's ideas and thenceforth devoured anarchist literature. He was particularly impressed by the "shattering exposure of the pretentions of the politicians", which might have precipitated his battle against the ILP's 'old gang'[1]. Anarchist groups evolved from the ILP[2], from the SDF through the Socialist Labour Party which had broken away from the latter in 1903, and through other syndicalist-inspired bodies like the Plymouth Socialist League - a direct split from the Industrial League.

1. Paton, Proletarian Pilgrimage, p. 207.
2. Freedom, May 1903.

The almost total isolation of anarchism from the rest of the socialist movement was now gradually diminishing. After a long interval in which anarchist propaganda had been mainly confined to its own thinning ranks, it broke out into the wider political arena, although the anarchist doctrine did not rank among the most popular and it was its syndicalist variety that had the wide appeal.

Important leaders of the current upsurge of militancy like Tom Mann and Guy Bowman had their imagination fired by many of the anarchists' criticisms and ideas, though they stopped short of total acceptance. Syndicalist-anarchists figured prominently in the broadly-based Industrial Syndicalist Education League which was established in 1910 by Mann upon his return from Australia, and by Bowman. Both were in direct contact with French and Spanish syndicalists and under their influence. Anarchists attended the inauguration meeting and took an active part in the conferences and agitational work of the League. At the League's new year celebration, Malatesta congratulated it on its libertarian ideas, and John Turner, a member of its Executive Committee "declared that Syndicalism was giving to progressives a much needed opportunity to translate their theories into action"[1]. Ted Leggatt was another active participant and Lane, Aldred and a few other anarchists contributed to its publications. Alongside other syndicalists and sympathisers, anarcho-syndicalists distributed the famous 'don't shoot' letter - for the publication of which Mann, Bowman and two others had been imprisoned and charged with incitement to mutiny - and joined in the demonstrations over the issue[2]. Anarchists were also involved in the ideological debate about trade unionism which finally killed the League after two years of existence.

At times anarchists spoke from the platforms of other syndicalist groups and in 1913 participated in the International Syndicalist Congress which took place in London. Syndicalist-inclined papers occasionally wrote about

1. The Syndicalist, Jan. 1912.
2. The Anarchist (Glasgow) 3 May 1912.

anarchism quite favourably[1] and the topic again came to the fore. In a speech given on 4 October 1911 Jim Larkin, a labour organiser and the founder of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union whose brother was a fully-fledged anarco-syndicalist, declared that "anarchy was the highest form of love"[2].

It is impossible to disentangle the influence of anarcho-syndicalism from the other syndicalist currents circulating at the time, as in the pre-war years the labour movement was shot through with ideas common to all these currents in tone and aspiration. Yet whatever its contribution to the growth of anti-parliamentarian and militant concepts, its own advance was even then hampered by the stigma attached to it. Anarchism in this period won a certain measure of popularity, but in no way gained the general esteem it had enjoyed in the '80s. The renewed interest in ideas akin to anarchism did not generate an analogous extensive examination of its theory; nor did it generate an interest in co-operation with its exponents. Apart from the fact that the suggestions made by anarchists seemed too extreme and ineffective, even among those who accepted the basic tenets of syndicalism, the fear of identification with anarchism appears still to have stunted its growth. Not only did the violent taint eclipse what might otherwise have been congenial to some individuals, but it also made anarchism's potential adherents and collaborators steer clear.

The SDF, anarchism's old enemy, was there to aggravate the situation. Its leadership, whose intention was to keep the Executive "absolutely united on fundamental principles and on object, method and general policy"[3], was time and again frustrated by a series of schisms in the early 1900s, most of which were led by people holding syndicalist points of view of one form or another. As part of the British

1. See for instance Daily Herald, 26 Aug. 1912. Also ibid., 24 March 1913.
2. George Dangerfield, The Strange Death of Liberal England (London, 1966), p. 261.
3. Justice, 29 March 1913.

Socialist Party, established in 1911, the SDF (from 1908 the Socialist Democratic Party (SDP)) was faced with yet another pro-syndicalist opposition. Justice reacted to the advent of syndicalism by embarking on a crusade against it[1]. The barrage of articles taxing syndicalism with a catalogue of sins directed many of its barbs at anarchism which some members of the SDF unfailingly detected behind the syndicalist force. Thus in a round-about way, the appearance of syndicalism reopened the wounds the SDF still nursed from its past encounters with anarchism.

Almost every article about syndicalism reminded the readers that "Syndicalism is only a recrudescence of that parasitical Anarchism which infected the Socialist movement in this country some twenty years ago"[2]. Syndicalist sympathisers were those who flirted "with the hashed-up Anarchist nonsense now dubbed Syndicalism"[3]. Articles refuting anarchism, pulsating with anger and emotion, were once more a common feature of Justice. As in the old days, the hand of anarchism was seen behind all the difficulties of the SDF: the anarchists threatened its unity by "getting into the branches and causing confusion until turned out"[4], and a "pernicious disruptive Anarchism in the name of 'Syndicalism'" was blameworthy for the "unedifying squabbles" doubt and disintegration in the Executive[5].

In the old manner of the SDF, anarchist behaviour was accused of having damaging repercussions for the SDF, as it strengthened "the forces of reaction" and diverted SDF's energies from attacking the capitalist enemy who in the meantime developed "the chains of State bureacracy and governmental tyranny"[6]. The attention of other socialist parties was drawn to the disruptive character of the anarchists who would "pretend to adopt the principles of Socialism in order to obtain the better opportunity for hampering their advance and preventing their realisation". "Anarchism

1. For such a declaration of intent see ibid., 25 Jan. 1913.
2. Ibid., 27 April 1912.
3. Ibid., 1 Feb. 1913.
4. Ibid., 13 May 1911.
5. Ibid., 29 March 1913.
6. Ibid., 17 May 1913.

is directly opposed to Socialism, and Syndicalism is nothing but emasculated and disguised Anarchism" Quelch contended[1]. The word 'anarchy' was still a favoured term in connection with capitalism[2], and rivals were exposed as anarchists[3].

During the Sidney Street affair in 1911, Justice uninhibitedly joined the chorus of the capitalist press in proclaiming that "Anarchism, by its glorification of mere lawlessness, does, too often, afford a cloak and a harbour for criminals of the vilest type and police spies and plotters of every description"[4]. Conveniently assuming that the perpetrators were anarchists, the paper seized the opportunity to insist that "Anarchism is a diseased product of capitalism-individualism gone mad", held by men and women "whose mental balance is ... uncertain"[5]. Every anarchist group, it stated, included an agent provocateur.

Overreaching itself Justice implied that Emma Goldman was in the pay of the Tsarist secret police, and in the same breath warned its readers against anarchists in general. Asked by anarchists, other socialists and some of its own members to substantiate its claims, the paper was content that its conviction "that with few exceptions, Anarchists are either agents or dupes of the police"[6] was sufficient proof. It is in expressions such as these that the old prejudices of the SDF become explicit.

Yet, however much such attacks brought to the surface the traumas that had lain dormant in the SDF for more than a decade, the primary target was syndicalism, the SDF's considerably more threatening enemy of the time. The intimate connection between anarchism and syndicalism - upon which the SDF insisted far in excess of any other socialist force and certainly beyond the syndicalists themselves - seems to have been above all intended to give the syndicalists a bad name. The effectiveness of this method is impossible to determine. But that it was one of the

1. Ibid., 29 March 1913.
2. See the Election Manifesto of 1906.
3. Justice, 17 May 1913.
4. Ibid., 21 Jan. 1911.
5. Ibid., 13 May 1911.
6. Ibid., 20 May 1911.

weapons in the political war in the socialist camp is highly instructive of the odds that stood in the anarchist way. It reinforces the impression of a lingering assumption among socialists that anarchism possessed the power to defame whoever was associated with it. That this reputation was a burden is corroborated by the conscious decisions of some anarchist groups, like the Plymouth Socialist League (1911)[1], and perhaps also the International Revolutionary Labour Union in Leeds (1907), the Tooting Libertarian Society (1909) and the Free Socialists in Manchester (1909), to refrain from inserting the specific name in their titles with the view to avoiding the pejorative connotations of the tag. Guided by the same apprehension, participants at the 1912 Leeds conference expressed doubts about the advisability of using the word 'anarchist' in the title of the new paper[2]. This reason accounted for the title The Voice of Labour in 1914[3]. In fact, one of the main advantages Lane saw in syndicalism was that it was pushing in the same direction as anarchism but without "that terrible word 'anarchy'"[4].

Indeed, to treat the anarchist movement as a small deviant sect which nonetheless served as a catalyst impelling some socialists and a few radical thinkers to test, rearrange and consolidate their ideas would not reveal the full extent of the impact of anarchism on British society. To appreciate the full value and scope of anarchist influence, it is necessary to investigate, besides these limited positive effects, the prevalent image of anarchism. In this respect the impact of anarchism was out of all proportion to the size of the movement. Thus if the mark left by anarchism on British society was psychological rather than socio-political in a substantive and practical sense, it was a mark that strongly affected all sections of society, and in turn the movement itself had had political and cultural repercussions. The second part of the thesis will expose the nature of the image and will examine the effect of its repercussions.

1. For an admission that this was a deliberate policy see Freedom, Nov. 1910.
2. Ibid., March 1912.
3. Ibid., April 1913.
4. Letter to Barker, 17 Dec. 1912. [N.C.].

PART TWO: Appearance.

4. The Image of Anarchism.
5. The Anarchist Image in Literature.
6. Some Repercussions of the Image.

CHAPTER FOUR. THE IMAGE OF ANARCHISM.

The first part of the thesis showed that the anarchist movement was multi-faceted: it harboured different ideological streams, ethnic groupings and organisational frameworks. These in turn varied in social composition, tactical emphasis and content of activity. The British movement, whatever its divisions, placed primary emphasis on education, and in practice showed little inclination towards aggressive action. This, however, was not the impression the public entertained. Though the movement projected multiform images, the public opted for one particular set of images to the exclusion of all others. The salient views of anarchism held by the public were that of a destructive system of beliefs and correspondingly violent people. Ultimately, anarchism came to represent for many the fearsome evil forces which menaced the peace and security of mankind. The reality of anarchism as presented so far gained no foothold in the public mind.

That a number of anarchists in certain parts of the world ostensibly resorted to the knife and the bomb as a means of accelerating the coming revolution, and that in Britain the violent vocabulary heard in some anarchist circles was interpreted almost as action, provided a factual basis for the image and continually sustained its credibility. However, without minimising the force of these factors, this thesis maintains that they explained neither its intensity nor its prevalence. If the source of public prejudices is to be comprehended, it is necessary to look outside the movement.

Having very little, if any direct contact with the movement, the public was forced to assess it through the filters of intermediaries, themselves only interpreters of the phenomenon. The public had to formulate its images and opinions through what was both traditionally and currently associated with anarchism. In this context the factors that provide a key to understanding the process of image formation are the semantic connotations of the name and the

instruments of political socialisation. Along these lines, it is first necessary to examine the deep-seated prejudices which the word 'anarchism' provoked, and then to analyse the type and contents of the information about anarchism which reached the public. Such a survey will present the components of the image as well as chart the manner in which it was fashioned.

Language was the main weapon used against anarchism in Britain. Anarchists were attacked from political platforms and from pulpits as well as in newspapers, pamphlets and books. Yet in addition to this conscious level of repudiation, the choice of name made language an unwitting vehicle of opposition to anarchism. Given that people put a particular interpretation on certain stark facts according to their preconceived modes of thought, and that thoughts are expressed by words, the meaning attached to words plays a very important part in the interpretative stage of the fact. The concept of anarchism in its earlier linguistic form preceded the existence of the political movement. It is maintained here that the meanings ingrained in the word were among the main sources of the bias against the anarchist movement. The root 'anarchy' and the various derivatives of it carried not just a normative quality but a negative one long before anarchist sentiments became consolidated in an ideology. Hence, when anarchism first surfaced as a political entity it found itself ensnared from the outset by the antipathy its name engendered. That the public was predisposed to take this conceptualised view of anarchism made the language a participant in the constitution of facts.

The word itself stemmed from the Greek 'anarchia' meaning no-rule, absence of government. The word acquired, however, a pejorative meaning reflecting the prevalent assumption that the state of society without rule could never be healthy and beneficial, that it must by the nature of things be diseased and afflicted. Even in Plato's Republic the word 'anarchy' conveyed popular liberty as a chaotic and unnatural social state characterised by the

breakdown of morals and the reversal of conventions, and finally resulting in tyranny[1]. This interpretation echoed the time-honoured socio-political belief in the necessity of law and order for the well-being of society. The rejection of the likelihood of the co-existence of happiness and anarchy indicated that the word had become normative. The social and political implications of the concept signified misrule, uncontrolled government, mob-rule and lawlessness. The essential concomitant of such a predicament was disorder: a society lacking proper government and legal regulation could not but be in a state of disarray. Thus, distinct from the socio-political context, though as a result of it, 'anarchy' became synonymous with confusion, turmoil and disharmony. These, separately or in conjunction, implied an abnormal setting.

The word was apparently assimilated into English from the Medieval Latin or French in the 16th century, along with its mélange of negative connotations. In 1642 Sir E. Derring had used the term in its original yet normative sense when criticising a certain bill as "the mother of absolute Anarchisme"[2]. Following the same pattern, the opponents of the Levellers during the English civil war of the 17th century stigmatised them as "Switzerising anarchists"[3]. In a pamphlet the second part of which, The History of Independency, was subtitled "Anarchia Anglicana", Cromwell and his party were attacked as those who "Sacrificed to their Fancies, Lusts, Ambition and Avarice, both their God and Religion, their King and Country, our lawes, Liberties and Properties, all duties Divine and Humane"[4].

If the laws of society reflected the divine laws of the universe, as was fundamental to Christian belief, any attempt against this design was, in effect, a rebellion against God[5]. Anarchy was correspondingly relegated to the camp of God's enemies, as the following quotation will show:

1. Plato, The Republic (VIII. 562/A).
2. The Oxford English Dictionary (1933). S.V. Anarchism.
3. Encyclopaedia Britannica (1973).
4. Clement Walker, Relations and Observations (n.p. 1648), p. A2.
5. St. Paul (Romans, 13).

"Anarchy, by levelling all ranks, transgresses a great law of nature, and of the God of nature"[1]. The association with the kingdom of the devil was inevitable: "a land, where there is no order is a land of darkness, and of the shadow of death". Pandemonium, the dwelling place of the forces of evil, was described as dark, sinful and rebellious, while its counterpart, Heaven, was the seat of order, light, righteousness and obedience. No wonder Milton chose to associate Hell with "Eternal Anarchie" in his epic Paradise Lost[2]. Anarchy and order were antipodes used respectively as the attributes of these two polarised categories, one evil and the other good. Satan symbolised the defiance of God's commands. He was the arch-anarch. The myth of the rebellion of Satan indeed strengthened the associative connection between disorder, evil doing, revolt and anarchism. Through it the term acquired a metaphysical content of ungodly mutiny and profane disobedience. Even the Romantic reversal of values ascribing heroic energy, kindness of heart and independence of mind to the untamed rebel, and the positive usage of the term 'anarchy' by Shelley, could not alter the traditional negative aspects. Political, social, moral, theological and cosmic associations of 'anarchy' with immorality and evil remained deeply etched.

The anarchists adopted the name in its original meaning. For them the term positively epitomised the ideal anti-authoritarian society[3]. The public interpreted the name with the subsequent metaphor and cultural values in mind.

The ensuing assessment of the essence of anarchism and the performance of some anarchists laid an additional negative stratum on the discredited term. This tag, with its variegated negative connotations - old and new - would dog the British movement throughout the course of its existence and would taint it with disrepute, irrespective of the ideas

1. John Erskine, The Fatal Consequences and the General Source of Anarchy (Edinburgh, 1793), pp. 4, 7.
2. John Milton, Paradise Lost (II, 896).
3. For such an acknowledgement see David Watson, "An Anarchist Meeting in Scotland", Good Words, vol. 35 (1894), p. 446.

it canvassed or its type of activity. If a person had not defined himself as an anarchist, yet maintained an anarchist position, he would not invariably have been seen to possess these negative attributes, or at least not with their full force or implications. The various meanings attached to the term were loosely employed, separately or in conjunction[1]. Their accumulated effects cast the term in a stigmatising role. The word[2] possessed such force that in a certain sense it could be said to have taken a life of its own, separate if derived from what it signified. It became a word of abuse employed to generate antipathy towards, and moral condemnation of, the object of reference, or to enhance an earlier negative judgement. In a cartoon published on 29 October 1881, John Tenniel, the principal cartoonist of Punch, portrayed the Fenian rebel as an apish monstrous figure. Paddy was pictured threatening the righteous Britannia, while his hat bore the inscription 'anarchy'[3]. Pejorative use of the term increased during the period under discussion.

It was inevitable that the abusive value of the term constantly reflected upon the movement, as indeed the term was in turn also strengthened by the development of anarchism. The combined effect of the semantic meanings of the term and the movement's image added another powerful dimension to the word: threat. The term became an emotion-rousing scare word, and could thus work on a wide variety of feelings and instincts, in contexts not at all related to anarchism. Evidently in Britain the power of the word was no less potent than the power of actual physical force elsewhere. Enmeshed in the dark web of disparaging associations spun round the anarchists, the movement had a dubious prospect of achieving positive ideological impact.

1. For an example of the varied and often unrelated semantic uses of the term see the article "Musings without Method", Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, vol. 167 (May 1900), pp. 688-99.
2. Throughout this chapter the reference to the word includes the root 'anarchy' and its various grammatical derivatives.
3. Lewis P. Curtis, Apes and Angels (Newton Abbot, 1971), p. 41.

The force behind the word, however great, would not have been realized so fully had it not been for the spectacular growth of interest in the anarchist movement which was both provoked and reinforced by the means of communication[1]. The semantic meaning of the word conditioned the public to think in a certain direction. The media not only greatly heightened this tendency but also ensured that anarchism became a household word. The overwhelming evidence of a uniform image presented by the means of communication makes it likely that the Church and the educational authorities, two other fundamental formulators of attitudes, would not have contradicted this image. Given this, the image in its various guises will be chiefly derived from the instruments of communication available then.

The emergence of anarchism coincided with the rise of mass readership. People were thirsting for knowledge and publishers complied with the demand. Cheap editions of the classics, books for popular consumption, newspapers written especially for the common reader and dictionaries, encyclopaedias and other manuals designed to disseminate knowledge of all kinds to all people, were poured onto the market, and later would be found on shelves in homes and public libraries.

Attitudes to anarchism contained in novels and stories will be discussed in the next chapter. The bulk of this chapter is dedicated to the press. But before this examination, it is instructive to look for some guidelines in dictionaries and encyclopaedias. These reference books constitute the best illustration of how the change in political attitudes is reflected in the language. Indeed, assuming that the change in the semantic content of words is in turn one of the effects of transformed historical conditions and cultural attitudes, the compendium of the development of the term alongside that of the anarchist movement, which both the dictionaries and the encyclopaedias provide, may serve as a paradigm of the development and ramifications of the image. In them one can trace the meaning invested in the term both before it became the name of a

1. Encyclopaedia Britannica completely ignored the word in the 9th edition in 1875.

doctrine and afterwards; the interpretation of the existence of anarchism in the most compact form; the points in time at which the greatest attention was paid to it and the measure of impartiality and open-mindedness shown in dealing with the matter. Besides, such a study is illuminating in another important respect. Being themselves vehicles of information, the dictionaries and encyclopaedias were in a position to shape opinion, especially as both were implicitly trusted to be the most objective authority on the entries they contained.

The anarchist movement in Britain came to the fore relatively late. Therefore until the middle of the 1880s the common denominator of the various entries was the description of a given situation and not of a political ideology. 'Anarchy' was the form generally employed. The word stood for either the principle of no-rule or for the subsequent substitute for chaos. Encyclopaedias defined 'anarchy' as "the name given to that state of matters in a country where no government exists or exercises any authority, and opposing factions struggle for supremacy"[1]. Times of anarchy were short periods of turmoil and restlessness caused by political upheavals or revolutions. Dictionaries referred to the word in its metaphorical sense of disorder, confusion etc. 'Anarchy' implied the possibility of violence, but without stressing its inevatibility.

When anarchism ceased to be an abstract concept and came to mean people and a militant missionary 'church', the term was adjusted to the new historical circumstances and anarchism was depicted as a revolutionary movement and its aims were set down[2]. In the 1880s anarchist circles in England were still in the embryonic stages of consolidation, and terrorism on the continent was not yet such an issue as to stimulate public concern. Accordingly, most of the expositions were factual reports - whether cursory or detailed - of the history of the anarchist movement, with objective information about their articles of faith.

1. The Globe Encyclopaedia of Universal Information (London, 1876).
2. Blackie's Modern Cyclopaedia of Universal Information (London, 1889).

The fears aroused by reports and rumours of anarchist outrages in the 1890s were immediately reflected in the definitions. The violence that had only been suggested before, became the most recurrent and overpowering element in them. Violence became the essence, the raison d'être of anarchism. Moreover, the definitions were no longer impartial and factual, but emotional and opinionated. "This Golden age is to be ushered in... by bomb explosions and dynamite outrages... by inflammatory harangues and attempts at 'expropriation'" claimed the author of the entry 'Anarchists and Anarchy' in the 1894 edition of Hazell's Annual[1]. The expositions became subjective and pervaded by emotionally laden words like 'insane'[2], 'violent death', 'menace to society' and 'disease'[3]. Some mentioned violence as one of the means amongst others, but the focus remained the various assassinations of distinguished notables. Chambers Encyclopaedia added supplementary information every few years, giving details of recent political assassinations, as did Hazell's Annual. Furthermore, Chamber's edition of 1895 referred those who wanted more information on the subject to the entry under 'infernal machines'[4]. Anyone who wanted to find out what anarchism meant confronted this highly coloured information, the implied associations, and even the legal means to combat anarchism. The frequency and the length of references gradually increased as the movement's agitational efforts became more pronounced.

The passage of time gave little substance to fears of an intensification of the anarchist campaign in Britain. The period of individual anarchist terrorism was virtually at an end at the close of the century. Correspondingly, the references to anarchism became less frequent and the entries shortened. The new century saw more balanced presentations of the topic in a number of encyclopaedias. Everyone's Cyclopaedia of 1907 acknowledged both the positive and negative tendencies intrinsic to the movement[5]. Others went

1. Hazell's Annual (London, 1894).
2. The Nutall Encyclopaedia (London, 1900).
3. The New Encyclopaedia (London, 1913).
4. Chambers Encyclopaedia (London & Edinburgh, 1895).
5. Everyone's Cyclopaedia (Glasgow, 1907).

further and explicitly rebutted the prevalent image. Perceptively, the Everyman Encyclopaedia of 1913 remarked: "The discussion of anarchism often engenders more heat than light much of it doubtless being due to the obsession of the opponent's mind by the 'propaganda by deed' practised by some supporters of Anarchism"[1]. It further enlarged that as a result of the freedom of expression it granted to the individual, "Anarchism is saddled with responsibility for the views of any individual, however balanced, however criminal, who chooses to label himself an anarchist". The Newspaper Readers' Companion of 1906 emphasized that "the bulk of the supporters of the movement have shown no intention of having recourse to physical force;... and towards the attainment of their ideal they strive with the pen rather than with the bomb"[2].

The most balanced approach was displayed in the 11th edition of Encyclopaedia Britannica. Here, the spiritual leader of communist-anarchism, Peter Kropotkin, was given the task of putting forward to the public what anarchism meant. Typically, he sketched its theoretical structure as scientific and presented the main arguments as based on common human tendencies in the past and in the present[3]. He then elaborated on the principles of anarchism and outlined the history of the idea and the movement. For the convenience of readers interested in the "chief modern so-called 'Anarchist' incidents", the editor supplemented Kropotkin's article with a resumé of anarchist outrages. However, he preceded this section with a reminder that the term 'anarchist' was "loosely used in public, in connexion with the authors of a certain class of murderous outrages", and that "the general public view which regards Anarchist doctrines indiscriminately is to that extent a confusion of terms".

Such observations could counterbalance the association between anarchism and violence only to a limited extent, as by the new century it had become a part of public conscious-

1. The Everyman Encyclopaedia (London, 1913), p. 101.
2. The Newspaper Readers' Companion (London, 1906).
3. Encyclopaedia Britannica (1910).

ness, with some w rks of reference continuing to incorporate condemnatory remarks[1]. The awareness enshrined in those few entries which attempted to expose public prejudices towards anarchism is in itself an indication of the prevalence of such prejudices.

Dictionaries and encyclopaedias are thus useful indices of some perennial tendencies in the attitude to anarchism. Above all, they demonstrate that even reference books were liable to lose detachment and objectivity when reviewing anarchism. An investigation of the press should track down more fully the information poured out to the public, clarify the direction in which the public was encouraged to move, and through the taste of its readers locate the image perceived by a cross-section of the population.

Newspapers provide the best source for these indicators in the period under discussion. They were the main fount of public knowledge on political events, and as the only source of news, were its interpreters as well. Cheap and readily available, newspapers had a broad appeal. The combination of these facts made the press the most effective manipulator of public opinion. This is not to say that people necessarily adopted the standpoint of the paper they read or behaved politically according to its recommendations; only that the general press helped to shape public outlooks and attitudes and was particularly efficient in forming political images. But the influence was not one-sided. The press necessarily accommodated the views of its readership as well. Newspapers were hence both the cause and the mirror of public views. And as their circulation was extensive they represented and reflected a wider social spectrum than any other instrument of communication.

1. It is interesting that even after the First World War and in the present day, encyclopaedias and dictionaries still associate the verb 'to annihilate' with 'anarchism' (Joseph T. Shipley, Dictionary of Word Origins (N.Y., 1945)), and still define an anarchist also as "one who uses violent means to overthrow the established order" (Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary (1973) and The Modern Library Dictionary of the English Language (N.Y., 1947)).

It is important to distinguish between the popular and the serious press. This division is illuminating as the two varied greatly in quality and style. The pressures of the open market which inhibited the popular papers from burdening their readers with a high quality of writing or demanding a long period of concentration, gave these papers the broadest appeal and therefore wide influence. Moreover, each type had its own characteristics, readership and methods of persuasion: there were discernible nuances of tone and presentation between them and they differed in the use of stigmatic adjectives and in the degree to which they yielded to prejudice, and hence in their appeal too. In analysing them side by side an attempt will be made to indicate both the similarities and the divergences in their treatment of anarchism.

The newspapers under examination are dailies. The daily reinforcement of their selected news and underlying opinions made them, in particular, effective image formulators. The standards determining the selection of the papers to be examined were the size of their readership and the extent to which they were preoccupied with anarchism. Papers with small circulations and those which very infrequently dealt with the subject could not have had much effect. The newspapers selected represent shades of the two principal contemporary political orientations - conservatism and liberalism[1]. By this means a clear exposition of the predominant view of anarchism will be given. For comparison, this inquiry will be followed by a presentation of the image emanating from the radical papers and the intellectual periodicals. Together, all these types of papers will present a range of contemporary responses to the anarchist movement.

The ways and means by which the popular press tackled anarchism will be exemplified through the Evening News[2],

1. Allusions below to conservative and liberal papers refer only to those particular publications under examination.
2. A London evening paper (est. 1881). After Harmsworth took control (1894) it had the largest evening paper circulation in the world, reaching the million mark around the turn of the century (F. Williams, Dangerous Estate (London, 1957), p. 138). It expressed a doctrinaire conservative world view.

The Daily Mail[1] and the Daily Express[2]. The Times[3], The Daily Chronicle[4] and the Daily News[5] will represent the kind of image projected by the serious press.

In assessing others, people tend to associate unfavourable personal characteristics with political attitudes of which they disapprove. Anarchists were thus stigmatised with manifold epithets, and as happens often to members of a particularly hated group, the subsequent model of impression was consolidated into a stereotype compounded of a set of characteristic attributes. Individual anarchists were assumed to be similar to one another with respect to those attributes. Relevant information and individual differences were neglected.

Of all the ascriptions three architypal traits seem to persist and recur throughout the years: criminality, madness and bestiality. The common denominator between them was that each lacked a certain basic human or humane dimension: the first morality, the second rationality, and the third was defiant of any human characteristic. They were used singly or together: each of these blanket charges set

1. A morning paper (est. 1896) that swept the market, reaching close to a million circulation in 1910 (David Butler and Jenny Freeman, British Political Facts, 1900-1967 (London, 1968), p. 284). Its line was that of a right wing conservatism.
2. A morning paper (est. 1900). Its circulation is estimated as 400,000 in 1910 (ibid.). Promoted conservative opinions.
3. A morning paper (est. 1788). The quotations of the number of its readers vary depending on the source. One quotes the figure of 41,200 for 1891, decreasing to 35,600 in 1903 and rising to 44,900 in 1907 (A.P. Wadsworth, "Newspaper Circulations, 1800-1954" in Manchester Statistical Society. Transactions (1955), p. 25). Though its fame did not match its circulation, The Times was known as the most "prestigious" paper (Richard Boston, The Press We Deserve (London, 1970), p. 43). "The paper's own policy was... to avoid the evil of State control and the danger of revolution". (The History of The Times, vol. 4, pt. 1 (London, 1952). p. 36.)
4. A morning paper. Started as a small London daily (1869) but in the period under discussion reached a circulation of a few hundred thousands (Butler, p. 284). Described as progressive and appealing to the "Liberal.Unionists of the shopkeeper class" (Williams, p. 129).
5. A morning paper (est. 1846). Its circulation decreased from 93,200 in 1890 to 39,000 in 1901 (Wadsworth, p. 20). Changing to a ½d. paper in 1903 increased its readership to 151,900 in 1907. Known as liberal especially from 1901 when the magnate Cadbury became its Chairman. Circulation figures before the First World War are mostly unreliable. The figures quoted above give some idea of the sort of circulation involved.

the anarchist apart from other men; together they deprived him of a place in society and put him in the position of society's worst enemy.

Criminals in general were at that time widely thought to constitute a distinct class with its own personal characteristics, each member of which was malignant, fierce and aggressive by nature. The papers explicitly declared that the anarchists belonged to this class[1]. Hence, the ascription of criminality was not confined to anarchists who offended the law, but to anarchists in general. This was made clear through a persistent association between anarchists and crime. Alongside a straightforward labelling, the newspapers wrote about anarchist outrages in the same columns in which non-political crimes were reported, and in the very same columns they inserted details of anarchist activities which did not involve any crime[2]; and vice versa, political crimes which had nothing to do with anarchism sometimes appeared in columns headed 'The Anarchists'[3]. The Evening News provided news about anarchism in special columns entitled 'Anarchy and Dynamite', or 'Dynamiters'. The publicity given to odd instances of violent crime and the insinuation of a host of others not only rendered criminality the prevailing habit of the anarchists, but also transferred the emotional attitudes aroused by criminal acts to any anarchist activity.

The papers were also quick to pinpoint anarchists as probable culprits whenever suspects were lacking, especially when gangs were involved. Prima facie and circumstantial evidence served as sufficient proof of anarchist involvement. In a similar fashion to this regular habit of the popular papers, The Times persisted in implicating the anarchists in the Tottenham case (23 January 1909), in which a police-

1. The Times, 7 April 1892. So renowned, if controversial, was this related hypothesis about the genetic origin of crime in general and anarchist criminality in particular, that anarchists were used as statistical data in criminological studies. See below pp. 240-44.
2. Evening News, 20 April 1892. Here the report about Nicoll's trial for seditious writing (see ch. 1, p. 45) was followed by news about bomb explosions in Luxemburg, about anarchists in France and about a jewellery robbery.
3. The Times, 14 Sept. 1901.

man was killed while chasing robbers, even when it was publicly claimed that no connection had been established. The Times also incriminated, on the basis of very flimsy evidence, the anarchists in the Houndsditch affair (16 December 1910) in which three policemen were killed by jewellery robbers whose hunt led to the Sidney Street Siege[1]. The Daily Chronicle fell into the snare of seeing an anarchist hand in unsolved murder cases. In a mysterious murder in Clapham, for instance, the S sign carved on the victim's face was a strange enough symbol to indicate, for the paper, the possible involvement of anarchists[2].

The elaborate descriptions of police battles with anarchists in the pre-war years bore out the involvement of anarchism with criminality and evil. After each of the killings of and injuries to policemen in Tottenham, Houndsditch and Sidney Street - all of which were wrongly attributed to anarchists - the reporters were careful to emphasise the antithesis between the good forces of law and order and the evil forces of anarchism. The comparison was always drawn between the brave, kind and merciful policemen, and the savage, unfeeling anarchists. The funerals of the policemen and the criminals were contrasted with each other, inviting unlimited sympathy in the first instance, and contempt and rejection in the second[3]. When society was thus presented as the victim, the community under attack, it was only to be expected that those readers who felt part of the same

1. ibid., 26 Jan. 1909; 29 Dec. 1910. Ernest Vizetelly, the author of The Anarchists (London, 1911) bore witness to the current tendency "to assume that every foreign criminal who appears in our police-courts must necessarily be an Anarchist. Nothing could be more absurd" he affirmed (p. 294). Denying that the chief protagonists in the Tottenham affair were ever proved to be anarchists, he proceeded to explain that anarchism "has become an everyday term of opprobrium, and to the journalistic mind it followed" that they were necessarily anarchists (p. 295).
2. The Daily Chronicle, 7 Jan. 1911. That there was no justification for such "wild far-fetched" theory was corroborated in the memoirs of a C.I.D. man who figured prominently in the case. According to him these "silly stories" were provoked by the coincidence of the murder with the Sidney Street affair. The wound, he further suggested, only "very remotely resembled the letter 'S'" (Frederick Porter Wensley; Forty Years of Scotland Yard (N.Y., 1933), p. 117). The author was later the Chief Constable of the C.I.D.
3. The Daily Chronicle, 30 Jan. 1909.

society would react as though they personally had been assailed.

Insanity generally implies disorientation, confusion between right and wrong. Yet beyond this, especially at the turn of the century, it evoked notions of degeneracy, both physical and mental, a kind of lower form of existence. The madman, being different and bizarre, provoked fear. He was repulsive and outcast. Significantly, the anarchists were defined as sick both in body and mind[1]. The attribution of insanity to anarchists did not necessarily signify a medical diagnosis but more often implied that anarchism was a moral disease, the symptoms of which included a loss of control and lack of moral fibre. In fact, both the criminal and the madman were considered deviants within the social system, recognising no limits and capable of performing any offence. Impelled by this logic, the Daily Express lumped the two qualities together and referred to all anarchists as "lunatics with a homicidal tendency"[2]. Against such a portrayal society stood superior and infallible in its rationality and ethics.

While the attribution of criminality and madness also provided a quasi-rational explanation of anarchism, the application of bestial traits to anarchists was primarily a matter of routine abuse. The Daily Mail was explicit: anarchists "are the savage beasts whom our civilization cannot tame"[3]; "The typical anarchist is of the lowest, most degenerate type, a human being who has reverted to a wild animal"[4]. The Daily Express chose to depict the anarchists as the most hideous animals: in one editorial, anarchists were concurrently 'vermin', 'reptiles' and 'hydra'[5]. The Evening News was more polymorphic in its expressions: it frequently preferred to combine the attributes of madness and bestiality into one simile, that of a 'mad dog'[6].

1. Daily Express, 13 Sept. 1901.
2. ibid., 16 Sept. 1901.
3. The Daily Mail, 12 Sept. 1898.
4. ibid., 31 July 1900.
5. Daily Express, 9 Sept. 1901.
6. Evening News, 30 April 1892; 12 Sept. 1898.

Collectively, the movement was stereotyped as an organised conspiracy. Evidence of this was readily available for those who sought it. First of all, the memory of the London anarchist International Congress in 1881 and its violent speeches might have lingered still. Secondly, the contacts maintained between anarchists from different countries gave some indication of international co-operation which, with a little imagination, could be embroidered into a grand plot to destroy society by conspiratorial means. The cosmopolitan anarchist community in London suggested to some that a world wide anarchist underground was at work, possibly centred in London. The intrinsically secretive nature of such an organisation disposed the papers to credit anarchists with all manner of clandestine organisation, to represent individual criminals as acting for a group and to impose a link between isolated events.

The conspiracy theory flourished primarily in the popular press which revived it with a flurry of speculation after every anarchist outrage. The discovery of the Walsall ring (1892), first brought home the danger of organised anarchism, and was to many a confirmation of the validity of the theory. In the midst of the storm, the Evening News reported that police agents, after taking great risks, had reached the conclusion that a conspiracy existed in London for "chloroforming and kidnapping public men, Government officials or foreigners of note visiting this country and holding them to ransom" in order to replenish the "revolutionary treasury"[1]. This conviction was based on the sole fact that one of the men arrested had a chloroform bottle in his possession.

Against this background and that of all the continental outrages, the explosion in Greenwich Park (1894) was bound to appear to some as part of a master plan. The assassination of the Empress of Austria (1898) drew from The Daily Mail an unequivocal definition of anarchism as "another name for organised crime"[2]. Since its first appearance, the Daily Express had conditioned its readers to think about anarchism in the context of plots. Following the

1. Evening News, 14 April 1892.
2. The Daily Mail, 12 Sept. 1898.

attempted assassination of the American President McKinley, who subsequently died from his wounds, the Daily Express came out with reports of panic all over the world[1]. Titles such as "Stories of Anarchy" and "Dark Tales of Plots and Counterplots" intensified the scaremongering tone[2]. Detectives were reported to have been summoned urgently to do their duty[3]. That the Houndsditch affair involved the participation of "a desperate murder gang of Anarchists" provided convincing proof that the victims fell prey to a calculated plot: Goldstein, the dead burglar, was declared to be "one of the five heads of the Anarchist movement in Europe" and the leader in England[4].

Surreptitious planned group violence must have seemed more ominous than the scheming individual who could not be a menace to society, even if he resorted to terrorist acts of the most atrocious kind. By himself the individual anarchist was unable to topple a system sustained by overwhelming police and governmental power. At best, he could cause unpleasant disturbances. It was different with an efficient international underground organisation whose strength lay in its secrecy.

While the popular press opted for the conspiracy theory and saw an anarchist behind every bush, the serious press was rather more cautious, though under the weight of alleged evidence pouring in from all sides, it, too, occasionally yielded to these assumptions. The Times reported the explosion in Greenwich as a miscarriage of a plan by an anarchist conspiracy headed by Bourdin[5], and suspected a connection between Bourdin and the Walsall anarchists[6]. Such were the repercussions of a bomb incident on British soil that even liberal papers, which generally refrained from such speculations, came to feel that perhaps they should "hesitate before dismissing this alleged vast anarchist plot as a mere invention"[7].

1. Daily Express, 9 Sept. 1901.
2. ibid., 12 Sept. 1901.
3. ibid., 9 Sept. 1901.
4. ibid., 29 Dec. 1910.
5. The Times, 16 Feb. 1894.
6. ibid., 20 Feb. 1894.
7. The Daily Chronicle, 16 Feb. 1894.

Though some criminologists detected common bodily characteristics among anarchists which explained regularities in their behaviour, a concrete and distinct physical image of a typical anarchist did not emerge from the press. Yet from time to time the popular press supplemented news and articles about anarchism with illustrations. Some of them gave additional weight to the anarchist archetype as, for instance, the six gruesome cartoons collected from several American papers and published by the Daily Express , which depicted the anarchists as men or wild beasts at the moment of annihilation[1].

In many cases, there was no explicit message in the illustrations themselves. It was the accompanying commentary which created the requisite impression. The publication of a photograph of Malatesta carried no particular interpretation. But the description of Malatesta as the "Head of the Anarchists" whom the police knew to be "the stormy petrel of the revolutionists", and whose presence in London always resulted in terrorist activities, made the photograph a means of identifying Malatesta as a criminal rather than an objective description of the man[2]. On another occasion, a composite face made up from the photographs of nine anarchist "desperadoes" served as a concrete illustration of what was determined by an unknown phrenologist to be an anarchist archetype[3]. The face was composed from the various features of the assassins of the statesmen and of three of the convicted Chicago anarchists.

The illustrations were not always of anarchists but were sometimes visual representations which tended to incriminate them or substantiate the danger they posed. The promise by the Evening News to accompany the sensational article "8,000 Anarchists in London. Where These Enemies of Society Live in this Great Metropolis" with illustrations taken from "Secret Anarchist Prints" was fulfilled with the insertion of a picture of the awesome Ravachol and two

1. Daily Express, 23 Sept. 1901. See Appendix, pp. 362-63.
2. ibid., 13 Aug. 1900. Apparently Malatesta projected a particularly potent and malevolent aura in many quarters, as references of this nature were made in all sorts of publications. See for instance Ch. 6. p. 345.
3. ibid., 23 Sept. 1901.

sketches portraying the brutal manner in which the anarchists were planning to attack the 'Capitalist'[1]. To an article intending to expose "Anarchists. Their Habits and Pastimes", the Daily Express added these pictures: the first depicted dummy statesmen being used as targets for anarchist gun training; the second presented Proudhon, the man "responsible for all anarchist outrages"; and the third was a large sketch of an anarchist meeting place in Soho[2]. The same paper also illustrated how to "crush the reptile"[3]. Accompanying such a headline was a drawing of the foot of "civilised society" crushing the "vile reptile of Anarchism". The papers surpassed themselves at the time of the Sidney Street Siege, when they immortalised in pictures the location from every angle, and every second of the events as they unfolded. The photographs retold the story more dramatically than mere words[4].

There were also ample impressionistic generalisations of anarchist facial expressions and demeanour. Such descriptions were often provided by reporters who visited or claimed to have paid visits to anarchist clubs to scrutinize the movement at close quarters, and thus give their portrayal a more factual and realistic basis. In addition to affirming the fearsome expressions and mental characteristics of the anarchists, the reporters also authenticated the sordid or, alternatively, the sinister and weird atmosphere assumed to prevail in places where anarchists congregated.

The physical locality of the Berner Street club was described by a reporter of the Evening News in highly emotive terms: "A more unlovely place than this club could scarcely be conceived", he stated[5]. "Of any attempt at cleanliness or sanitary decency it is guiltless, while for furniture - dirty wooden benches and repulsively ugly deal

1. Evening News, 17 Dec. 1894
2. Daily Express, 13 Sept. 1901.
3. ibid., 10 Sept. 1901. See Appendix, p. 364.
4. It is interesting that the Daily Graphic - one of the most popular contemporary illustrated magazines - also reported news about anarchism in a very one-sided way. What made its presentation a matter of political judgement was its selectivity and commentary. This paper only used pictures of anarchist criminals, police searches and arrest, and the results of anarchist terrorist activities. The captions ensured that the pictures would be understood as intended.
5. Evening News, 25 April 1892.

tables do duty". "It is such institutions as these" the reporter warned, "wherein is sown the seed of violent methods which threaten the lives and property of the community". The people who frequented the place, described as mostly unemployed foreigners and "non-descript characters", were prevented from carrying out their extreme and dangerous doctrines only "by the absence of the financial munitions of social order".

The description of the anarchist ambience subtitled "A Stirring Description of a 'Ravachol Night at a London Club" was coloured with an almost nightmarish quality[1]. The comparison of the reporter, Zitrik, to Dante in Purgatorro set the stage for a supreme horror story. More details about the place and its occupants were gradually unfolded to the terrified reader. Something sensational was bound to happen. Zitrik had known that at the very same night he would witness "the splitting of old friendship, the bursting of the dearest ties of affection and comradeship". The voices of the anarchist crowd sounded like "strange wild beasts". Apart from a slight mention of a speaker for brotherhood, the reporter recounted only voices perpetually calling for the shedding of blood, killing and massacre. The issue on the agenda concerned the notorious anarchist murderer Ravachol. Someone got up to speak in his favour. "There was a fierceness in his language and his gestures, a gleam in his eyes that pictured the dagger and invited murder". The atmosphere conveyed no deliberation or rational debate, but only the inflammation of instincts and desires and the incitement of low emotions. A declaration by one member that Ravachol was his idol, his Napoleon, was followed by chaos. Disorder prevailed and nothing else could be heard except threats, shouts, hisses, revolutionary songs, curses, strugglings, gaspings, indecent songs and humorous remarks. These scenes revealed a world of ugliness, depravity and violence which reflected the supposed mental and moral disorder of the anarchists and their intentions[2].

1. Evening News, 18 Dec. 1894.
2. cf. "In the camp of the London anarchists", The Pall Mall Gazette, 10 Aug. 1887 and The Daily Chronicle, 2 Jan. 1911. For a more factual description of the anarchist scene in London see Evening News, 4 Oct. 1887.

Although such descriptions exhibited extreme negative approaches, the attitude to anarchists was somewhat more complex than appears at first sight. Amidst all the ridicule and contempt a hidden chord of fascination with the subject crept into the reports. Anarchist women especially fired some imaginations. They were a mystery, particularly for their alleged ability to mesmerise anarchists into action. After McKinley's assassination, Emma Goldman, the American anarchist, was everywhere publicly condemned for driving the assassin to murder the President. She was vilified and blamed for inspiring many other crimes, yet at the same time she appeared to have commanded some respect for her "remarkable influence" even if this was only "over the feeble-witted Anarchists"[1].

The references to Goldman drew attention towards other women members of the movement. The authorities were reported to dread lectures by anarchists of Louise Michel's type, whose "eloquence" was capable of upsetting "the mental balance of the neophyte Anarchist[2]. Another article, entitled "Anarchist Queen", dealt with Teresa Brugnoli - "La Bella Teresa" - who was described as "irresistible", as "a woman of singular beauty and magnetic influence"[3]. According to the Daily Express, she had planned the assassination of the King of Italy (1898) by alluring the assassin, and also had a hand in the assassination of McKinley[4]. This feeling of combined fear and wonder rendered the image all the more acute.

The sum total of the above-mentioned qualities, moods and habits established a typology of anarchism. More often, the connotation of the word 'anarchist' was the abstraction of a certain behavioural pattern derived from psychological characteristics which were accepted as inherent and immutable,

1. Daily Express, 9 Sept. 1901.
2. ibid., 10 Sept. 1901.
3. ibid., 11 Sept. 1901.
4. For a similar reaction to famous anarchist women see Evening News, 21 Dec. 1894. While chasing the "stunt story" at the time of the Sidney Street affair, Philip Gibbs, a writer and reporter for The Daily Chronicle and The Daily Mail, visited anarchist clubs. Describing his experiences, he admitted to having been "hopelessly outraged by this brilliant, extraordinary and dangerous woman" whom he had met at the club (Adventures in Journalism (London, 1923), p. 68). From the description, she must have been Millie Witkop, Rocker's wife. See also The Daily Chronicle, 10 Jan. 1911.

rather than a person who held a particular set of political beliefs. This approach did not serve to exonerate the anarchist of responsibility. The violent intentions of the anarchist and the traces of his presumed activities were what counted. This stereotype offered a convenient rationalisation when anarchist violence begged some kind of analysis. The motives behind anarchist aggression were located in the individual anarchist himself, and not in forces outside his control. He was either a criminal, a lunatic, or simply a wild beast, and hence deficient in common sense and moral instincts. His actions were therefore self-explanatory: the psychic characteristics were symptoms of a deep and incurable inner disease - moral and mental - and not the effects of social circumstances. And if social causes had nothing to do with the anarchist mode of thought or behaviour, society was blameless and anarchism had no worthwhile lesson to teach. The conspiracy theory further simplified the causes of social evil.

It was more in step with the popular than with the serious press to remain in the domain of psychological typology as the most applicable categorisation of anarchism and almost totally neglect its ideological connection. Yet violence appeared the characteristic mark of anarchism in every type of paper. Ideas were only rarely good material for news, while violent acts constantly occupied the news columns. Thus it was that newspapers - whether popular or serious, conservative or liberal - concentrated almost exclusively on the violent aspect of anarchism and were provoked to report about anarchism only in periods when anarchist violence - real or imagined - was perpetrated. Consequently, both the framework and content of any discussion on the subject were violence, terrorism and assassination.

As in works of reference, the degree of press interest in anarchism reveals that the 1880s were relatively quiet years, years in which the British public was not yet fully aware of anarchist existence. The anarchists reached the peak of their notoriety in the first half of the 1890s, when explosions, assassination attempts on the continent and bomb scares in Britain were regular and anticipated events. The

Evening News reported daily on any case involving anarchists in England or abroad, and filled its pages with details that very few other papers thought worth printing[1]. The subject matter always concerned anarchist terrorism, the presentation of which caught the anarchists in the act of secret and foul scheming, on the run, or on trial. Particularly thrilling were the accounts of anarchists being hunted by the police. The Times published a special column 'The Anarchists' after any major occurrence involving anarchism, in which series of anarchist crimes and punishments were recounted. Having the best foreign department, its foreign news columns were more informative about anarchist activities abroad than those of any other paper[2].

The trend of reporting extensively on anarchism subsided in the second half of the decade when anarchism reduced its level of spectacular agitation. In fact, no mention was made of anarchism for long periods. These lulls were interrupted only with the news of another anarchist outrage; hardly did such an act of terrorism become news when piles of material demonstrating the violent nature of anarchism, interspersed with storms of abuse, were again poured out to the public. It was only then that the subject of anarchism in general drew concentrated reports, articles and comments.

Reported illegal activities of immigrants and foreign refugees in the early 1900s were immediately associated with anarchism. Correspondingly, the subject of anarchism cropped up whenever the controversy about alien immigration was topical. Thus, even if the subject of anarchism had not arisen in the context of terrorism, it was still connected with felony and by its association with foreign immigrants with disrepute. From whatever angle the subject was approached, the anarchist stood condemned.

Little attempt was made to understand anarchism as a social and intellectual phenomenon, the roots of which were historical and circumstantial, or to present its socio-

1. For a paper of only four pages, i.e. 28 columns, out of which approximately ten were advertisements, the occasional presentation of an anarchist case in half or three quarters of a column was significant.
2. Instead of acquiring the foreign news through an agency like other papers, The Times had correspondents in major cities who passed on information to London about what was happening overseas.

economic content and promise of a more just society. In so far as there was a reference to anarchist beliefs, it rather tended to stress their destructive objectives. Intimations of familiarity with the existence of peaceful anarchism usually took the form of a simplistic and exhaustive division between terrorists and theoreticians, implying either a tactical or a temperamental difference. Though this demarcation brought a speculative quality to anarchists, it was only rarely followed by a discussion of anarchist philosophy. And if this demarcation suggested a distinction between good and bad anarchists, this was often supplemented with assertions which explained away the existence of non-terrorist anarchists, while reinforcing the prevalent image. These assertions were that some anarchists were capable of rising above their belief, that the theoreticians constituted a tiny minority or were as guilty as the terrorists by provoking them to acts of violence. The last assertion seemed to be particularly favoured[1].

To reduce the thinking dimension of anarchism even further, propositions conveying suggestions to this effect were overshadowed by stereotyped assertions. The intensive examination of a few days' coverage of anarchism in the Evening News provides a good illustration of the way in which seemingly bland remarks were engulfed in a flood of anti-anarchist propaganda. On 17 December 1894 the paper put philosophers, poets, dreamers and reformers at the head of the English movement. However, in juxtaposition to these quietist intellectuals, the supposedly non-influential elite of the movement, the paper placed in the lower ranks, the "mere idle" and "worthless vagabonds" who hid their criminal habits in what appeared to them to be a "sounding name". Two days later it made reference to anarchist philosophers who wished to propagate their theory by the distribution of literature, but the actual topic of discussion was the "bombistes". Two days afterwards - on 21 December - the Evening News mentioned the unruffled Christian-Anarchists, yet Ravachol was in the same breath described as "the perfect Anarchist".

1. See for example Daily News, 27 April 1892.

The two liberal papers under review tended to report on anarchism rather than to comment and were on the whole more willing, though not hasty, to acknowledge the ideological roots of anarchism. But their reports, too, subscribed largely to the stereotype view. In one of its editorials on the subject The Daily Chronicle admitted that there were several kinds of anarchism, but the next sentence blurred the distinction and reinforced the stereotype. It said: "but a fourth group seems to be true Anarchists... This is the most fantastic and fanatical of all the Anarchist groups, but it is also the most energetic in organising outrages"[1]. Its members were either desperate and connected to the criminal classes, or "earnest, high souled creatures, half mad by long brooding over 'man's inhumanity to man'".

For obvious reasons it is difficult, and in many cases even impossible, to dissect the process of opinion formation and define precisely how, and at which stage, the press intervened to impose its views; or to differentiate accurately between intellectual judgement and suggestion. It is evident, however, that biased statements - conscious and otherwise - abounded in the daily press. In addition to open expression - in editorial comments and background feature articles - opinions were also conveyed and provoked in an allusive and suggestive manner. Anarchists were incriminated by association, insinuation, innuendo and comparison.

Such practices were least employed by the liberal papers. Their reports tended to refrain from incriminating anarchists by implication and, on the odd occasion, also contained news about the suppression and victimisation of anarchists abroad with no further condemnatory commentary such as The Times would append. The Daily News cautiously headlined the daily reports of the Walsall trials "The Alleged Anarchist Conspiracy"[2], and The Daily Chronicle called its discovery "Reported Anarchist Conspiracy"[3]. The intensity of their absorption with anarchism depended largely on actual anarchist outrages and not

1. The Daily Chronicle, 27 April 1892.
2. Daily News, 8 Jan. 1892.
3. The Daily Chronicle, 8 Jan. 1892.

on suspicions and rumours. In addition, as mentioned earlier, they were readier to recognise that there were anarchist idealists engaged in the search for a solution to the existence of poverty and misery. Another substantial difference between them and the more conservative papers, as will be shown in Chapter six, was in their suggested treatment of anarchism.

The difference between the popular and serious press was reflected in the manner in which each type put forward the anarchist image. In the popular press crusade against anarchism emotions and abusive generalisations prevailed. The full list of adjectives by which it constantly characterised the anarchists was endowed with strongly demeaning emotional content. The emotional and impressionistic value of these character traits was as important as their informative function. The effect of both was to reduce the complex situation of anarchist existence to a simple and deeply negative reaction. Whether the attributes were hysterical expressions of the helpless hatred some felt for anarchism, or alternatively, conscious propaganda devices, they conveyed the unmistakable impression that anarchists were "men of intrinsically evil mind, loving evil for its own sake and allowing themselves to be goaded by inhuman envy and homicidal malignity to injure those who have never injured them or any human being, and whose murder cannot possibly avail to further any cause, good or bad"[1].

Though the serious press appears to have shared these conclusions, it expressed them in more subtle ways. Determined to preserve a respectable and reserved façade, it refrained from such overt and crude observations. Even if the competition from the rising popular papers forced the serious press to change its humdrum style, it still toned down sensationalism and on the whole avoided words of abuse.

Yet for all the shades of difference between the various types of papers in their reference to the subject, only a very specific kind of information concerning anarchism filtered through to the public. That the subversive image

1. The Daily Mail, 17 Sept. 1901.

figured in the news columns - which were supposed to present hard facts - prevented the correction of its falsity. Moreover, only very rarely would a paper question the veracity of the image. In addition, the number of anarchist letters printed was very small. The latter was not due to anarchist inertia. From various records it is known that anarchists wrote letters to the press but remained unpublished[1]; on the rare occasions when their side was given space, the treatment was mostly only superficially fair. The Times will serve as an illustration of this attitude because of the high regard for its letters page[2], and because of all the papers under examination The Times printed the greatest number of letters on anarchism.

Amidst hostile letters debating the desirability of using constitutional and executive channels against anarchists, The Times published a protest letter by John Pagan, an anarchist who reacted to a long article which, he argued, had treated the anarchists in half truths and confusion[3]. But Pagan's letter only served as an excuse for The Times to print a full length leader and a long letter to reinforce the view that although there existed an anarchist section termed "milk-and-water anarchism", the majority of the anarchists were "social failures" driven to anarchism by envy and hatred, and therefore did not, and would not, hesitate to spill the blood of their opponents[4]. Pagan tried to paint the unaccepted picture that all anarchists were against any use of violence. The answering letter, written by the same author as the original article, maintained the opposite: wherever there were anarchists, there was a danger of violence, he said. The leader concluded that "The Theoretical Anarchist has become the confirmed criminal".

It thus appears that the image seeped deeply into various levels of society. There is no indication of a substantial division of opinion on the subject. Even if there

1. When Reynolds's Newspaper invited readers' views on the subject of anarchism, it received large numbers of pro-anarchist letters of which a selection was published. See below, p. 246. Also Rocker, The London Years, p. 207-08.
2. Hamilton Fyfe, Sixty Years of Fleet Street (London, 1949), p. 90.
3. The Times, 11 Jan. 1911. The article to which he reacted was published on 4 Jan. 1911.
4. ibid., 13 Jan. 1911.

existed an unrecorded favourable view of anarchism, it could not have been widespread or dominant.

Yet another indication of the prevalence and entrenchment of the image rather unexpectedly emerged from the world of science. During the time that the image was moulded and constantly reinforced in the press and other publications, it also achieved a scientific status. Two related systems bolstered it with a supposedly infallible basis: the one was physiognomy - the art of judging character from the features of the face or the body in general - and the other, its derivative discipline phrenology - the science determining human characteristics by craniometry. This penetration into the scientific arena is a monument to the beliefs and prejudices of the age.

The most thorough and consistent in his verifications of the authenticity of the image was the celebrated professor Cesare Lombroso[1]. Although his theories were developed outside Britain, the gist of them reached Britain, if not with the same impact as in France and the U.S.A. Books and articles by and about him were printed alongside those of people who drew inspiration from his methodology and adopted his conclusions as their starting point. Gli Anarchici (Turin, 1894), the book dedicated exclusively to anarchism, was not translated into English (though it was translated into German in 1895 and French in 1896), but his views about anarchism were made known through the diffusion of his theories[2].

1. Cesare Lombroso (1835-1909), considered by many the father of modern criminology, was an Italian doctor who started as a specialist in mental diseases and became known as a physical anthropologist, classifying human types according to their physical features. He showed particular interest in criminals and the mentally affected, and was the first to establish a typology of criminals. His operative conclusions on how to deal with criminals were widely known as well as controversial.
2. See The Quarterly Review, vol. 178 (Jan. 1894), pp. 1-30; Olindo Malagodi, "The Psychology of Anarchist Conspiracies", The Westminster Review, vol. 147 (Jan. 1897), pp. 87-91; G.M. Fiamingo, "Italian Anarchism", The Contemporary Review, vol. 78 (Sept. 1900), pp. 339-43. It was at least partly under his influence that contemporary books about criminology dedicated whole chapters or large sections of them to the discussion of anarchism. See Louis Proal, Political Crime (London, 1898) and Josiah Oldfield, The Penalty of Death (London, 1901). For references to his theories in the daily press see Evening News, 21 Dec. 1894; Daily Express, 21 Sept. 1901 and his obituary in The Daily Chronicle, 20 Oct. 1909.

Lombroso's comments on anarchists reflected his general doctrines about criminals. In fact, the anarchists were an illustration for him of the collective phenomenon of crime. From tests carried out on criminals and by measuring the circumference, size and capacity of their skulls, he found that they shared peculiarities of the physical structure. From this he concluded that criminal behaviour had a biological basis and that criminals formed a distinctive species. However, he differentiated between the born criminal whose atavistic roots and physiological structure predetermined his crimes, and the criminaloid who was driven to crime by social and environmental causes. The anarchists he assigned to the first category. The innate criminal, according to Lombroso, exhibited pathological deficiencies which were symptomatic of degenerate human beings. From the physical, emotional and behavioural aspects, the criminal was close to the lunatic - notably the epileptic - to children, to the primitive races and to animals[1].

Indeed, who, if not the anarchists, best fitted this low ranking and subnormal category of human breeds? Anarchists had already been known as criminals, lunatics, social outcasts and morally degenerate. Lombroso supported these assumptions with empirical proof. After studying the physical features of anarchists in Paris and Turin in photographs, and from the pages of Michael Schaack's Anarchy and Anarchists (Chicago, 1889), he deduced from their common physical anomalies that the percentage of the criminal type in them was between 31 and 40, the highest proportion of criminals in any group other than ordinary criminals. He conceded that political criminals, inclusive of the most violent anarchists, were not common but of a higher order of criminals, and even acknowledged an altruistic streak and love of innovation in them, yet they were said to possess the degenerative characteristics common to criminals and to the insane, "being anomalies and possessing these traits by heredity[2]. The passions and vices peculiar to ordinary

1. For his views on crime see his section "Criminal Anthropology" in Twentieth Century Practice - an International Encyclopaedia of Modern Medical Science (London, 1897), vol. 12, and Gina Lombroso-Ferrero, Criminal Man (Montclair, 1972). (First published in 1911.)
2. Cesare Lombroso, "Illustrative Studies in Criminal Anthropology". III. The Monist (Chicago), vol.1 (April 1891), p. 339.

criminals and to the majority of anarchists were "impulsiveness, love of orgies, lack of natural affections and moral sense; and similar intellectual manifestations, such as slang, ballads, tatooing, hieroglyphics"[1]. To Lombroso the anarchists were "always epileptics, moral madmen, half educated or not educated at all; in their earlier years of life usually mild-mannered, but presently bloodthirsty"[2]. Some "have a rational manner of conducting themselves under ordinary circumstances" but "in writing and speaking they are demented"[3].

For all his pronouncements, however, Lombroso was not against social change as such, and his objections to anarchism did not stem from an anti-radical stand. But he distinguished between two major types of revolutionaries, a division which betrayed his discriminatory taste: true revolutionists, "the initiators of great scientific and political revolutions, who excite and bring about a true progress in humanity", and revolutionists who counted a large proportion of the criminal type among their ranks - regicides, presidenticides, Communards and Anarchists[4]. The people of the first category "are almost always geniuses or saints and have all a marvellously harmonious physiognomy". Indeed, "generally we see in them a very large forehead, a very bushy beard, and very large and soft eyes". As for the Communards and more so the anarchists, they recruited their forces from "ordinary criminals, lunatics, and insane criminals", and their physical features were crooked, asymmetrical or simply repulsive[5].

The precise parallel between the popular image and that which arises from Lombroso's writings is evident. The presumed professional abstraction of anarchists came out with the same components and general impression as the stereotype, as though Lombroso had compressed the conventional

1. Ferrero, p. 305.
2. Cesare Lombroso, "Anarchist Crimes and Their Causes", The Independent (N.Y.), 8 Dec. 1898.
3. Cesare Lombroso, "Anarchy. The Status of Anarchism To-Day in Europe and the United States", Everybody's Magazine (N.Y.), vol. 6 (Feb. 1902), p. 166.
4. Lombroso,"Illustrative Studies...", p. 336.
5. Ferrero, p. 305.

prejudices into his own model. Indeed, his methods as a whole could easily lead one to the conclusion that it was his bias which gave the anarchists pride of place among pathological varieties, and dictated the distribution of physical and mental traits to the anarchists as well as to the various other groups he was investigating. From these characteristics he in turn deduced normative conclusions.

Lombroso obviously believed in the validity of his thesis, having found for it a scientific explanation grounded in acute observations and quantitative techniques, yet in spite of the introduction of apparent statistical methods, his way of reaching conclusions was strewn with the same snares into which the 'lay' journalists fell. Like them, he deduced the general from a few examples and then proceeded to disregard all evidence to the contrary. Obviously, it would not have been difficult for him to find instances of anarchist criminality or photographs of anarchist prisoners in which they looked somewhat peculiar. These were used to prove the factual validity of his original hypothesis that anarchists were biologically disposed to crime[1]. The incursion of his value judgements into this seemingly detached information is made all the more understandable by his professed hatred for drastic change and militancy in general[2].

The fact that neither he nor many of his contemporaries sensed a violation of logic here, and could be led to credit these designations, suggests not only the nature of these studies, but also the power of the anarchist image. That scientists took the image as data, and moreover gave it a scientific finality, is a strong indication of the manner in which the image was unreservedly and blindly accepted as

1. Michael Schwab, one of the Chicago anarchists, demonstrated how Lombroso superimposed a systematic pattern on unbending facts in an article published in the Chicago Monist as an answer to Lombroso's observations in the same journal (see above, pp. 241-42). He explained that the pictures of the Chicago anarchists in Schaack's book, upon which Lombroso based a great deal of his conclusions, were distorted, while those which he dismissed as too old were in fact the most representative of how they looked at the time of their crime. (Michael Schwab, "A Convicted Anarchist's Reply to Professor Lombroso", The Monist, vol. 1 (July 1891), p. 520.)

2. To him rebellion was always sterile. Gradual reform was the only positive revolution, which should come about through "a slow, constant effort towards progress, preceded by propaganda". (Ferrero, p. 296.)

well as of its monolithic absorption. In a dialectical manner, Lombroso's speculations only lent the image credence and weight by appearing to be the end product of empirical research. The message contained in them was clear: the anarchist was a lower species; his character was predetermined by his inherent nature, and thus predictable and irreversible. Against such an authoritative verdict, attempted refutation had little chance of acceptance.

However prevalent this image of the anarchist may have been, it was by no means an exclusive portrayal. The stock image was accompanied throughout the period by a wide range of alternative presentations and approaches which appeared besides in the socialist and, naturally, anarchist press and publications, in the radical press and some of the intellectual periodicals. The radical press firmly believed in free speech and free expression of opinion as the undeniable right of all sides, and conceived its political duty as guarding against manoeuvres which might misrepresent all sorts of radical causes. Many intellectual periodicals avowed the traditional academic and liberal principle of the necessity to provide a breadth of subject matter and various standards of assessment. Therefore these were the most likely journals to unfold a more profound and exhaustive analysis of anarchism and thereby perhaps cut some ground from under the popular image. In doing the former they also provided some compelling insights into the image itself.

Whether or not it was done unwittingly, neutralising the adverse image might have come in a number of ways: first, by discouraging publication of stereotyped views; second, by accepting articles from which a totally different impression of anarchism emerged, though without necessarily being defensive; and third, by an open and direct attack on the falsity of the image and its proponents, so as to engender a complete and full recognition of its existence and of the problems the term entailed.

Because of the nature of the radical papers and their political orientation, it is difficult to trace in them material abusing anarchists or consistently describing them along the lines of the stereotype, though one could easily find polemical or critical articles inveighing against their theoretical stand or their use of violence. Such criticism, however, was never infused with the vocabulary and vicious imagery of the non-radical popular press. Some radical papers went beyond this and devoted space to social explanations of the anarchist phenomenon and to favourable interpretations, and made no bones about letting anarchists deprived of access to the non-radical popular or serious papers state their case and contradict the popular assumptions. Most conspicuous for demonstrating such attitudes was the veteran radical paper Reynolds's Newspaper[1].

At first the paper reacted to anarchism with outright condemnation of its ideology and practice, though qualifying its judgement by remarking that "What is good in Anarchism is altogether obscured by the baser traits exhibited in the actions of hot-headed fanatics"[2]. The paper further accused anarchist criminality of being detrimental to the cause of the poor and the progress of democracy and cautioned against confounding the anarchist creed with socialism. The same article, however, added: "We should be on our guard against indulging in panic fury when we hear of reported Anarchist outrages" as Government agents were often behind them, seeking "to bring unpopular or dangerous doctrines into ridicule or hatred".

It seems to have been this realisation, coupled with the belief that journalists were making political capital of the anarchist image to "minimise" the trouble from within, which transformed the paper into a shield for the more idealistic part of anarchism[3]. In any event, the more consolidated the negative image became, the more Reynolds's

1. One of the most popular Sunday papers, its circulation reaching around 350,000 in 1890. (Wadsworth, p. 23.)
It expressed interest in and was highly sympathetic to the labour movement.
2. Reynolds's Newspaper, 3 April 1892
3. ibid., 10 April 1892.

Newspaper emphasised other aspects of anarchism, as if to temper attitudes towards the movement, especially at periods of tension such as that of the Greenwich explosion. The paper then published responses by anarchists to the question 'What is the Cause and Cure of Anarchy', alongside the responses of public figures like Cardinal Vaughn, Hyndman and Labouchere. The anarchist contributions - which were published without censorship - came from such active members as Samuels, editor of The Commonweal, Goulding, Presburg and the Christian-anarchist publicist J.Morrison Davidson. The cumulative effects of their answers revealed the daily involvement of anarchists with clubs, lectures and the publication and distribution of pamphlets. Their driving force was said to be the quest for justice, truth and equity, and rebellion "against the privileged and pampered classes"[1]. G.O. Warren, the individualist-anarchist, concluded the series by pointing out the linguistic confusion that the word generated. The manner in which anarchists warmly thanked the editor for this extraordinary initiative shows how uncommon it had been.

Once in a while the paper exposed the fact that the popular image imparted little information about the real anarchist. The paper stressed the unreliability of the image by publishing a series of memoirs of the former Detective-Sergeant Patrick McIntyre, of the political department of Scotland Yard, in which he revealed the responsibility of the foreign and domestic police for some anarchist aggression - both verbal and physical - and reiterated that British anarchism was a case of "words speak louder than actions"[2]. His contact with anarchists as a police officer convinced him that although they "talked wildly and advocated schemes that seemed utterly impracticable to the ordinary observer, they were all quiet and peaceful men, well disposed to their fellow creatures in general"[3]. After the assassination of President McKinley a leader entitled "Hysterical Journalism" claimed that

1. ibid., 11 March 1894.
2. ibid., 14 April 1895.
3. For some more of his revelations, see Ch. 6 pp. 342-43.

Tories and reactionaries were trying to brand all the anarchists and criminals as jointly responsible[1]; and at the time of the Sidney Street Siege, the paper reminded the public that the only Englishman to have been killed by an anarchist bomb was Bourdin, who had blown himself up[2].

The paper opened its columns to both indigenous and foreign anarchists such as Malatesta, and employed J. Morrison Davidson, who not only wrote about the lives and thoughts of prominent anarchists in very favourable terms[3], but also presented, whenever possible, his own version of anarchism which was Christian at its core and peaceful in its methods. In the days following President McKinley's assassination he hammered home the inherent contradiction between terrorists and anarchists, denying to people like Ravachol and Vaillant the title of anarchists[4]. He himself was living proof that not all anarchists engaged in or approved of terrorism and that some of them at least were motivated by the same values and ideas as many of the readers.

Yet the treatment accorded to the anarchists by Reynolds's Newspaper was by no means typical. Except for this paper and in some measure also The Weekly Times and Echo[5], very few radical papers did as much to encourage the expression of such views. But if they did not develop an acute awareness of the discrepancy between the image and anarchist reality, their readers, on the other hand, could by no means have formed a stereotyped view of anarchism from the material appearing in them.

In the belief that their journalistic function was to publish anything of cultural interest, a large number of intellectual periodicals filled their pages with articles about anarchism, a subject which aroused much political and literary curiosity at the time. The journalistic treatment

1. ibid., 22 Sept. 1901.
2. ibid., 8 Jan. 1911.
3. An article on Bakunin was published on 8 Jan. 1911; on Kropotkin on 15 Jan. 1911; on Proudhon on 22 Jan. 1911; on anarchism in Japan on 5 Feb. 1911; on Chartism from an anarchist point of view on 19 Feb. 1911; on the Levellers on 25 Feb. 1911; and on Syndicalism on 17 March 1911 etc.
4. ibid., 15 Sept. 1901.
5. Davidson also contributed articles to The Weekly Times and Echo and to The Daily Chronicle.

of the subject varied however. Unsurprisingly, the radical periodicals tended to a more mellow approach, while the conservative periodicals adopted a harsher standpoint. In fact, some journals, rooted in a strong conservatism, provided a mouthpiece for abuse in a style and tone at times indistinguishable from the most jaundiced of the popular papers. For The Gentleman's Magazine anarchism was "a symptom of disease, a malignant fungoid growth... on the body politics"[1] and for The Saturday Review it had "no programme but murder"[2]. In many cases the anarchist stereotype was described in exhaustive detail.

> "Anarchy... has become a disease which is transmitted from one mad anarchist to another as hydrophobia is transmitted from one mad dog to another; and the mad dog and the mad anarchist have about the same capacity of reasoning as to the source from which they get their virus, or the objects they propose to themselves by biting"[3].

Anarchists were called "a gruesome pest", "brute" and "most noxious beasts"[4]. Other writers, while presenting an extremely negative picture, substituted abusive terms and generalisations with reasoned arguments.

Even so, as distinct from the daily or weekly non-radical press, the proportion between material invoking negative connotations and that voicing some sort of apology or explanation was by and large more balanced, both in some of the journals individually and all of them collectively. It must be added, however, that this was largely because several of the literary periodicals professed radical standpoints, or employed radical editors or contributors who left their stamp on the papers.

An example of a symmetrical presentation of both the image and its refutation was exhibited by The New Review. In the January 1894 issue, anarchist methods and organisation were discussed in a two-part article signed by Z and

1. C.B. Roylance-Kent, "Anarchism: Its Origin and Organisation", The Gentleman's Magazine, vol. 278 (April 1895), p. 349. See also Oct. 1901.
2. The Saturday Review, 14 Sept. 1901.
3. ibid.,
4. ibid., 9 June 1906.

Ivanoff respectively. In the first part Z, a pseudonym for Major A.G.F. Griffiths, an inspector of prisons, divided the anarchists into two types, the "ideal" who were the philosophers, and "the real" who were the terrorists. He claimed that the "far-fetched preposterous theories propounded with impassioned recklessness by the first-named has encouraged the second to the truculent practices, to those overt acts of violence"[1]. Then he characterised all the anarchists as "foreigners", "bullies of wretched women", "robbers" and "expert swindlers". They were "the very dregs of the population, the riff-raff of rascaldom, professional thieves, bullies who batten upon the shameful earnings of the weaker sex, cut-throats when opportunity offers, despicable desperadoes"[2]. In the second part, Ivanoff tried to explain what nihilism stood for in order to demonstrate the need to curtail the entrance of anarchists into Britain. He identified anarchism as the offspring of nihilism and then defined nihilism by discussing the various organisations or people who aimed at denouncing the Tsarist regime. In the next issue, however, the journal carried a response by Stepniak, the Russian revolutionary, in which he attempted to prove the ambiguity of the term 'anarchism'. He also undermined the credibility of the earlier article by taxing Ivanoff with being a Tsarist spy and accusing him of using the current anarchist scare in order to blacken the Russian revolutionaries and justify the acts of the Russian Government[3].

Unlike the daily press, which was concerned mainly with the transmission of news, the periodicals presented commentary and were thus more geared to engage in the analysis of the anarchist ideology[4] and of the history[5] and development of the movement[6]. Many of the articles were pervaded by a

1. "Anarchists: Their Methods and Organisation", The New Review, vol. 10 (Jan. 1894), p. 1.
2. ibid., p. 6.
3. S. Stepniak, "Nihilism: as it is", The New Review, vol. 10 (Feb. 1894), p. 217.
4. Wm. M. Beith, "A Leaf from Utopia", The Free Review, vol. 6 (May 1896), pp. 152-64.
5. Karl Blind, "The Rise and Development of Anarchism", The Contemporary Review, vol. 65 (Jan. 1894), pp. 140-52.
6. Stoddard Dewey, "The Anarchist Movement in Spain", The Contemporary Review, vol. 81 (May 1902), pp. 741-49.

wholesale condemnation and rejection of both the aims and proclivities of the movement. Others were not so categorical yet found anarchist premises too naive and optimistic, stressed the inherent incompatibility between the various arguments embedded in any one of the streams, or denied anarchist ideals a chance of materialisation[1]. Yet others were wholly sympathetic[2]. Unless the attack on anarchist tenets depicted them as nothing but guidelines for murder - in which case the underlying premise buttressed the image - the sheer conversion of the emphasis on personality into an emphasis on ideology toned down the image, whether the authors intended to function as some kind of rehabilitating agents or not. In fact, any discussion of anarchism in a context other than the one of terrorism and fear created tension between the description and the image. Similarly, any drift from a black and white approach amounted to a departure from the stereotype, however inchoate and temporary.

Very occasionally, opportunities were given to upholders of the cause to present their theoretical case. Most of them were men of letters whose reputations had already been established. Each obviously painted his own version of anarchism in a positive light, and commended its precepts to the readers[3]. In their anxiety to project a more appealing portrait of anarchism, some apologists fell back on psychological typology, and turned the stereotype on its head. They, too, conceived of anarchists as a group of people with common traits and tendencies, but in contrast to the stereotype, theirs was an idealised version of the anarchist. The most notable of those who resorted to this kind of defence was the Frenchman, Augustin Fréderic

1. George Hy. Wood, "Anarchism: An Outline and a Criticism", The Westminster Review, vol. 157 (Feb. 1902), pp. 181-86.
2. Wordsworth Donisthorpe, "In Defence of Anarchy", The New Review, vol. 11 (Sept. 1894), pp. 283-91.
3. John Armsden, "Legitimate Liberty", The Free Review, vol. 4 (June 1895), pp. 255- 63. Kropotkin's contributions will be discussed later.

Adolphe Hamon[1].

Hamon's views on anarchism reached the British reading public through articles in The Free Review[2]. One of them, "The Psychology of the Anarchist", constitutes an inverted Lombrosian exposition of anarchism[3]. Hamon accepted Lombroso's physiological assumptions that those "common tendencies of which the combination is special to the individual defined as Anarchist predominate in his cerebral organisation, differentiating him from other individuals"[4]. Unlike Lombroso, he found the anarchists to have many good qualities which combined to produce a sympathetic figure, whose virtues in fact far exceeded those of ordinary people. His superiority was expressed both in his mental capabilities and in his kindness of heart, which were the spring of all his actions. The cardinal characteristics of anarchists, according to him, were "the spirit of revolt or one of its modes (the spirit of criticism, of innovation, of opposition); the love for liberty of self and others; the sentiment of justice; the sense of logic; the curiosity to know; the spirit of proselytism". The anarchist treated all men as brothers and encompassed the whole world in his deliberations. Therefore he was an altruist, humanitarian, patriot and anti-militarist. He possessed "purity of character" as his cerebration was homogeneous, lacking any discordant element which revealed an undecided position[5].

1. Hamon was a lecturer at the new University of Brussels and the College Libre de Sciences Sociales in Paris, and a prolific writer on Hygienics, social psychology, criminology, drama and literature. Himself a socialist anarchist, he wrote a great deal about the subject. A delegate to the London International Congress, he was prominent in the campaign to allow the anarchists entry. For biographical details consult Hamon, Extracts from Various Periodicals (Paris, 1898).
2. Hamon also contribured articles to the anarchist journal Liberty.
3. For his criticism on the general criminological conceptions and techniques of Lombroso see A. Hamon, The Universal Illusion of Free Will and Criminal Responsibility (London, 1899).
4. A. Hamon, "The Psychology of the Anarchist", The Free Review, vol. 3 (Jan. 1895), p. 354.
5. For another positive phrenological portrait of the anarchist see Evening News, 21 Dec. 1894.

Obviously, this portrayal was not a matter of empirical deduction, but a reaction against the prevailing image. Being a product of reaction, the substitute stereotype was an exact antithesis to the insular and jaundiced propaganda against anarchism. His views were atypical, and because they were extremist, probably not conducive to the modification of opinion[1]. Nonetheless, Hamon brought forward new material, however dubious, to illustrate the kinder face of anarchism, and thus may have had at least some subliminal effect.

All these alternative presentations tended to make the gap between reality and appearance more and more distinct. Yet, dissatisfied with this indirect proof, some writers set about instilling a full awareness of the existence of the image and its ramifications. As early as 1884, Elisée Reclus, the French anarchist philosopher, expressed deep concern in The Contemporary Review at the thought that as "the word 'anarchy' is so evil-sounding... ordinary readers of The Contemporary Review will probably turn from these pages with aversion, wondering how anybody could have the audacity to write them"[2]. He confessed, however, to being accustomed to such treatment. "With the crowd of commonplace chatterers, we are already past praying for: no reproach is too bitter for us, no epithet too insulting". He then specified types of approach to anarchism, all negative in their primary assumption, and concluded:

> "Public speakers on social and political subjects find that abuse of Anarchists is an unfailing passport to popular favour. Every conceivable crime is laid to our charge, and opinion, too indolent to learn the truth, is easily persuaded that anarchy is but another name for wickedness and chaos. Overwhelmed with opprobrium and held up to hatred, we are treated on the principle that the surest way of hanging a dog is to give it a bad name".

1. Hamon himself supplemented his defence of anarchism with the more acceptable arguments that some "simply call themselves Anarchists as a label, under cover of which they excuse their moral conduct" (A. Hamon "Anarchism and Socialism", The Free Review, vol. 5 (Feb. 1896), p. 524); that violence was not the essence of anarchism, and that anarchism was an integral part of socialism (ibid., vol. 6 (April 1896) , p. 73.)
2. "Anarchy", The Contemporary Review, vol. 45 (May 1884), p. 627. This review also opened its pages to the more scholarly articles by Reclus.

Not all the defenders were anarchists or even sympathisers with the cause, but people who felt compelled to speak out, provoked by the injustice or the falsehood of the stereotype. At the first sight of home-grown hysteria, The Referee contended against the extremes of the stereotype that not all anarchists were Ravachols, and that the movement included "men of education and refinement" like Kropotkind and Reclus[1]. With the same thought in mind, a writer in The Primitive Methodist Quarterly Review observed that there were many people who "see nothing in the anarchist but a criminal of the most dangerous and cowardly sort, to be remorselessly hunted down and destroyed..." "There is much excuse for this feeling of deep resentment" he conceded[2]. "This, however, would be too hasty and sweeping a judgement; and is unnecessary" he added[3]. "In dealing with Anarchism it is possible to distinguish between its theories and its mode of propagating them. The former are at least entitled to the courtesy of refutation" he contended.

Less disinterested was Auberon Herbert who, himself close to anarchism in concept, perhaps felt personally threatened by the image and thus emphasised that anarchists were not aggressive[4]. Vernon Lee, an art and literary critic, set out to show in The Contemporary Review that neither anarchists nor nihilists were of "Mephistophelean origin" and that neither were they motivated by "heartlessness or levity" but by "a growing sensitiveness to the sufferings of others, and a growing respect for intellectual sincerity"[5]. Two articles in Good Words dismissed the current image by describing visits to anarchist clubs[6]. In contrast to the delineations in the popular press they sketched anarchist meetings, one in Whitechapel and the other in Scotland, at which diverse opinions about both targets and tactics existed side by side. The visit to Whitechapel itself was described as

1. The Referee, 24 July 1892.
2. John Forster, "Anarchism", The Primitive Methodist Quarterly Review, vol. 17 (April 1895), p. 340.
3. ibid., p. 341.
4. Westminster Gazette, 22 Nov. 1893.
5. Vernon Lee, "Gospels of Anarchy", The Contemporary Review, vol. 74 (July 1898), p. 77.
6. Macdonald, Menzies, "Among the Anarchists", Good Words, vol. 35 (1894), pp. 125-29 and Watson, pp. 445-47.

an eyeopener of the gulf between the image and reality. Burdened with an armoury of negative preconceptions and therefore full of apprehensions, the author is astonished that none of his expectations materialised. What he sees in the club are cleanliness, a pleasant atmosphere, humour, order, and moreover, respectability; no danger of any kind threatens him. In both cases, however, the visitors remained hostile to anarchist ideas. In 1910, the same image still predominated. Jethro Brown, professor of Law, still affirmed that only a few causes suffered as much as anarchism from "the uncritical depreciation which confuses essentials with accidental associations"[1].

Prince Kropotkin was the movement's most valuable asset, not only because of his contributions to its theoretical foundations, but also for the reactions he elicited. If anything, it was Kropotkin's residence in Britain, more than any argument or proof, that drew a favourable response to anarchism. There were other famous, colourful anarchist figures living in England such as Malatesta, but his was truly an experience diametrically opposed to anything other anarchists knew. The respect and admiration felt for him were manifested unreservedly. George Standring of The Freethinker admitted he admired Kropotkin "beyond all living men"[2]. "To me", he said, "he represents the triumph of principle over all the sordid motives of self-interest which bind the mass of us as with chains of iron". Each meeting with Kropotkin amounted to "an invaluable moral stimulus". Edith Sellers, the sociologist, credited him with the title "Our Most Distinguished Refugee"[3], and a description of him in an article in the Westminster Gazette elevated him to the level of a saint. The latter ended with a sentimental and idealised portrait of Kropotkin, echoing the veneration of the writer: "and the last I saw of him as I turned round at the little gate was his slim figure standing at the window, his face beaming, and his child in his arms"[4]. To A.G. Gardiner, editor of the Daily News, he appeared "to

1. Jethro Brown, "The Message of Anarchy", The Hibbert Journal, vol. 8 (July 1910), p. 761.
2. The Freethinker, 15 May 1892.
3. See The Contemporary Review, vol. 66 (Oct. 1894), p. 537.
4. Westminster Gazette, 9 March 1896.

belong to the realm of heroic fable", like Prometheus fighting despotism[1].

Kropotkin had royal blood, a romantic aura, charisma, social stature and academic fame. All those characteristics created an image which would be admired and respected, regardless of his anarchist connections. His noble birth in itself was enough to make men and women of high social standing seek his company and overlook his political affiliation. Indeed, his title provoked much interest, and many references in the press and elsewhere continued to use it, although he himself had renounced it at the age of twelve. The story of his escape from a Russian prison and of his semi-underground existence before he came to England fired many imaginations and his life style - a permanent reminder of all that he had given up - attracted much respect. Other points in his favour were his noble character, and the fact that he was a leading scientist. In contrast to the imaginary anarchists on whom Hamon based his positive anarchist, Kropotkin was a living example.

With such a background, Kropotkin became almost the 'darling' of the press. His scholarly contributions to British publications dated back to his confinement in the Russian Peter and Paul prison in the 1870s. His escape route from this prison led him through Sweden to England, where he earned his living by writing about Russian geographical explorations in the two papers which would from then onwards open their columns to him: The Times and Nature. His subsequent moves to Switzerland and then to France did not interrupt his writing for British publications. Even while he was imprisoned in France, he continued his research. The journal The Nineteenth Century and Encyclopaedia Britannica were only too happy to print his scientific conclusions. His arrival in England in 1886 accelerated and intensified this collaboration, which only ended with his death in 1921.

With both his professional work and notions of society, deriving from his scientific enquiries, he was able to disturb the obsessional association of anarchism with violence.

1. Daily News, 7 Dec. 1912.

Those who read his observations in books, journals and newspapers actually surveyed - knowingly or not - the mainstream anarchist solutions to society's ills[1]. The reviews of his publications tended to be sympathetic, if also critical of his suggestions, especially in liberal newspapers and intellectual periodicals. With certain ideological qualifications, The Daily Chronicle regarded Fields, Factories and Workshops as "fresh air"[2], and the Daily News commented that Mutual Aid was a "deeply interesting and suggestive work, [which] teems with principles which are both true and finely enunciated"[3]. The occasional reports on his lectures helped to diffuse his ideas even more[4]. His reputation was such that he encouraged a considerable number of intellectuals to take anarchism more seriously by prompting them to discover more about it. Indeed, when anarchism was seriously discussed as an ideology it was above all his ideas that were paramount.

Possibly because "few men have had an equally wide field of experience" - in the words of Georg Brandes[5], the Danish literary critic - Kropotkin was himself the subject matter of inquiry for journals of various kinds. Newspapers and periodicals published accounts of his life, especially on such occasions as his 70th birthday in 1912, his return to Russia in 1917, or the publications of his books[6]. The liberal papers gave him credit, but it was with The Times that he seemed to have established a unique relationship, even before he came to England. The paper participated in the campaign to release him from a French prison in the early 80s, and from then on developed a habit of reporting once in a while on his activities. It also opened its

1. Most of his books first appeared separately or as a series of articles in one of the most distinguished periodicals in England - The Nineteenth Century. In a chain reaction, his articles, being of popular interest, were compiled into books, the publication of which occasioned a renewed interest in him.
2. The Daily Chronicle, 3 Feb. 1899.
3. Daily News, 29 Oct. 1902.
4. ibid., 24 Jan. 1898 and The Daily Chronicle, 3/25 Jan. 1898.
5. Introduction to the first edition of Kropotkin's Memoirs, p. xxxi.
6. See for instance Daily News, 7 Dec. 1912 for an article by A.G. Gardiner, celebrating his birthday.

columns to Kropotkin's critical articles and letters, especially on the political situation in Russia[1]. Most of what was said about him in these papers was in a favourable context. Moreover, his life story acquainted the readers with the chronicle of the anarchist movement, and sometimes also elucidated the harsh reality its members had to face.

No less fundamental was the awareness he may have created of the actual existence of an unfair image and the need to rectify it. After reviewing Kropotkin's autobiographical articles in the Atlantic Monthly, the Daily News added that

> "it is fair to remember that the Anarchists are not responsible for all the associations that have gathered about that term, though they may have been imprudent in the choice of so ambiguous an expression ... They are not looking forward, as is popularly supposed, to chaos and confusion as the final cures for the ills that society as at present constituted is heir to... In other words, they employ the term 'Anarchism' simply in its original sense - that of dispensing with a supreme ruler"[2].

Obviously, a contrasting interpretation of anarchism did not necessarily lead to a change of opinion, but it at least stimulated some comparison and doubt. Even The Spectator, always so condemning in all its utterances on the subject, was aroused by the Reclus article in The Contemporary Review[3] to scent the possibility of a fallacy, if momentarily, in its own evaluation of anarchism. Maintaining that"doctrines so absurd or so mischievous... can never have any attraction for men of sense or feeling" but only for "the more stupid or the more brutal portion of mankind", the paper was perplexed by the contradictory evidence that a person like Reclus who was "quite incapable of finding pleasure in violence or cruelty merely for their own sakes", nonetheless held them[4]. As can be seen from various references to the subject, there was as time went by an increasing aware-

1. See for instance his article about the harsh conditions in Russian prisons (6 June 1890) and letter of 19 Oct. 1906 dealing with administrative exiles, and another one of 29 July 1909 where he protested against the Tsar's visit to England.
2. Daily News, 14 Aug. 1899.
3. See above p. 252.
4. The Spectator, 3 May 1884.

ness of the existence of a stereotyped image, the expression of which probably further undermined the very same image in other quarters.

But there was a limit to the influence of alternative points of view. Once a stereotype of a group had been forged, it was by nature rigid and resistant to contradictory information. Evidently only a saintly anarchist of the calibre and immaculate behaviour of Kropotkin could dent this wall of prejudice. And his reputation, too, was far from conducive to a meaningful change. His positive ideological impact outside the anarchist movement, although profound, was narrow. His influence was limited to the radical intellectual circles, who, while searching for a foothold from which to interpret the world, consumed some of his ideas or at least appreciated his goal. By the same token, the refutation of the image expressed the views of a fringe group and reached only a confined and overlapping readership. Both the radical newspapers and the literary periodicals appealed to a limited clientele, and of the latter a large number was inimical to anarchism all along and thus prevented any serious discussion of the subject and exorcism of the image in their pages.

Finally, minority opinion did not enjoy free rein either. Even in those very periodicals which seemingly provided fora for much needed debate, the insertion of articles relating to anarchism in favourable terms did on occasion meet with strong objections from the policy-makers of the papers concerned. The Fortnightly Review was a case in point.

This journal started in 1864 as a review for the "dissemination of any number of various views under a single cover[1], and claimed to be independent of any party or doctrine[2]. John Morley was its editor for a few years until he embarked on politics in 1882. The next editor was

1. Arthur Waugh, "The Biography of a Periodical", The Fortnightly Review, N.S. vol. 126 (Oct. 1929), p. 514.
2. Walter E. Houghton, ed., The Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals, Vol. 2. (Toronto, 1972), p. 173.

T.H.S. Escott, also a radical Liberal, who had, however, an eye for conservative contributors. Frank Harris, who edited the paper from 1886 to 1895, brought with him "a new burst of energy and brilliance[1]. Under him, the paper "blossomed into a brilliant period of critical and creative literature" the official history of the periodical wrote about his period[2]. He was the first to publish Oscar Wilde's The Soul of Man Under Socialism (February 1891), and he permitted Charles Malato, a famous anarchist, to express freely his feelings about anarchism and anarchists. Openly declaring himself to be an anarchist and acquainted with almost all other anarchists, including the terrorists, Malato professed his aim to be the removal of "some popular misconceptions regarding the true meaning of the word 'anarchist'", by recounting the good qualities of some of the more famous members; and he chose to elaborate on those whose names had only recently been the most threatening in European society - namely Vaillant, Ravachol and Emil Henry[3]. He confessed his love and admiration for Vaillant, depicting him as a gentle person whose life had been a struggle against poverty, and compared his admiration for him to what Republicans felt towards Cromwell. He went on to paint Ravachol as someone who used his money for the relief of the poor. Only Emil Henry received less favourable treatment and was des-

1. ibid., p. 180. Frank Harris, a journalist and writer, started his career as a militant propagandist of the SDF in the mid '80s. He forsook it to climb the more rewarding ladder of respectable journalism, but at heart remained a sympathiser of idealistic revolutionism, especially of the anarchist kind. This fact, combined with his scorn for liberalism, earned him the epithet Tory Anarchist (see the chapter under this name in Hugh Kingsmill, Frank Harris (London, 1932)). His interest in anarchism was unremitting. As the ambitious editor of the Tory Evening News at the time of the Chicago trial, he hid his sympathies, but exhibited them years later in The Bomb (1908), a novel he wrote after completing a thorough personal investigation of the subject. Through its publication he met and became an admirer of Emma Goldman. She combined what he idealised: "hatred of coercion and force", "sympathy with all forms of suffering", "understanding of poverty", "soul-searching humiliations", "intense enthusiasm", "heroic personal courage" and an adventurous life (Contemporary Portraits. Fourth Series (London, 1924),pp. 230, 248).
2. Waugh, p. 519.
3. Charles Malato, "Some Anarchist Portraits", The Fortnightly Review, vol. 56 (Sept. 1894), p. 315.

cribed as an intellectual snob who preferred ideas to people. The following month witnessed an article by the Italian-born author Ouida, in which she distinguished anarchist terrorists from common criminals and expressed her view that the "assassination of opinion is a greater crime than the assassination of a man"[1].

It was the article by Malato which was the last straw for Chapman, one of the publishers of the journal, and Harris was forced to resign. Harris himself recounted that Chapman had told him he had been shocked by the article, but having doubled the circulation of the Review, he had no fear of his position[2]. "Chapman", Harris proceeded,

> "hated the social movement of the time with a hatred peculiarly English: he looked upon a socialist as a sort of low thief, and pictured a communist as one who had his hand always in his neighbour's pocket. My defence of Henri and Ravachol shocked him in the soul. And without Chapman's sympathy, I couldn't make of the Review what I wanted to make of it. Chapman wouldn't have Davidson's Ballad of a Nun... and Bernard Shaw was anathema to him"[3].

The contract with the next editor, W.L. Courtney, included a clause which obliged the editor to present the contents of the journal for inspection to the managing director of Chapman and Hall who had the power of veto. In any event, Courtney was "a safe man"[4]. Frank Harris was "too" liberal in his management, even for a liberal paper like The Fortnightly Review. From then onwards, interest in anarchism decreased both within the journal and outside. A later article treated anarchist literature as being even more dangerous than anarchist bombs, and suggested that the advocates of anarchism should be subject to strict penal law[5]. By then The Fortnightly Review had long departed from radicalism.

Even if this single case cannot indicate the scope of possible censorship, it nonetheless provides a certain

1. Ouida, "The Legislation of Fear", The Fortnightly Review, vol. 56 (Oct. 1894), p. 559.
2. Frank Harris, My Life and Loves (Paris, 1945), vol. 3, p. 136.
3. Incidentally, Harris was a witness of Henry's execution in Paris as a journalist. See his description in Confessional (N.Y., 1930), pp. 215-22.
4. Waugh, p. 520.
5. G, "Anarchist Propaganda in England", The Fortnightly Review, vol. 89 (Feb. 1911), pp. 333-43.

pattern of approach. The expression of dissent within the framework of periodicals was possible but restricted. Enlightened opinion was rarely voiced and of the few attempts to combat the popular image, some were curtailed.

The anarchist image was thus the end result of a coalescence of factors. The name the movement adopted already carried an amalgam of pejorative designations. With the appearance of the first buds of anarchist life in England, what was felt about the word a priori found a posteriori demonstration. The movement was disliked for its approval of violent means, the totality of its objectives and its non-conformism. The successive instances of political terrorism overseas, violent rhetoric in this country and the involvement of an ostensible number of foreign anarchists with illegal activites reinforced the existing negative associations. Yet it was not as though the image was the outcome of careful observation of facts, debate and rational judgement. The picture the public had of anarchism, on the basis of which much of its resentment accumulated, was partial and distorted. The vehicles of communication - chief among them the newspapers, which had the most perfected means of reaching and therefore influencing the general public - persistently advanced this limited pattern in people's perception of anarchism. The periodicals were only semi-partial and from time to time the socialist press, too, gave scope to the image. Even books of reference took the image for granted, and there was only a little determined and free endeavour to uncover the authenticity of anarchist activities.

Thus a vicious circle was created whereby the less knowledgeable the readers were about the subject, the more susceptible they became to influence. Possibly, the illusion of equal access to all points of view and free flow of ideas made the information about anarchism appear all the more comprehensive and credible.

The image that radiated from the press was not necessarily a consequence of deliberate and conscious attempts

to form this image in the public mind. No doubt a great number of journalists assumed what they had written to be a straightforward and impartial record of significant events, a true representation of things as they were; or at least, a commonsense interpretation. Moreover, the presentation of selective information not only indicated a political viewpoint, but also expressed a journalistic judgement of public taste. Most likely the public seemed only too eager to seize upon the simple portrayal and accept the short cuts offered by the press. The undifferentiated attitude depicting anarchism as black had the advantage of simplicity over one compounded of shades of grey, and therefore was easily absorbed. The consistency and steadiness of the image relieved even the more sophisticated of the necessity to examine for themselves the merits of the anarchist objectives.

Above all, such a portrayal provided a highly satisfactory diet from the point of view of entertainment. It was inevitable that anarchist outrages would make headlines in all types of newspapers, and that any deeds provocative of intense emotions provided the makings of news stories for the popular press. The repeated criminal charges laid at the door of the anarchists and the reports and stories about them always embraced a strong element of sensation and drama. The detailed assassination attempts, the conjectured bomb scares, the catalogue of inexhaustible crimes attributed to them, and the all-round suspicions of the insidious influence of an anarchist alliance aimed at the political and moral dissolution of society, must have been like the most exciting fictional tales to the readers. The exposition of the daily routine of a political party or the particulars and outline of an ideology, could foment nothing approaching the same interest. The depicted sterotype appealed to the imagination and sense of mystery. The truth was much less stimulating. At any rate, the average citizen was only rarely motivated to probe the complexity of a political phenomenon, or to be an expert on ideological differentiations; and anarchism in particular was not enough of a political trend to furnish an incentive for people to inquire into it.

In substance, this was the way in which one anarchist approach swelled to become the prototype of any anarchist trend to the exclusion of the rest. It snowballed until it assumed the proportions of a social myth. This in its turn took root and flourished in the fertile soil of fictional literature.

CHAPTER FIVE. THE ANARCHIST IMAGE IN LITERATURE

Since literature is able to capture the cultural atmosphere of a period, much of the literary heritage can be used as an authentic historical document to reveal the conscious as well as some of the latent characteristics of that culture. However opinionated, the press in all its variety is, to a certain extent, always constrained by the demands of news reporting, by the analysis of real figures and events. The literary imagination is freer from such constraints. It creates its own fictional world and can therefore openly record current sentiments and reflect deep-seated beliefs, desires and fears that are rarely as sharply defined elsewhere. In this light, British fiction of the period, in which anarchists are the protagonists, can be seen as a reliable primary source to uncover the prevailing attitudes towards anarchism. The examination of such works in conjunction with the analysis of the press will reveal the dominant as well as some of the less conventional interpretations of anarchism; the emotional and intellectual responses; the fantasies, myths and insights accompanying the phenomenon.

The literature of the time also bears testimony to the strong psychological impact of anarchism. When one considers its actual numerical strength, anarchism appears to have seized the public imagination with a surprisingly firm hold: novels and short stories in which anarchists figured proliferated, and as this chapter will show, the anarchist image inspired writers of diverse genres and thus permeated all levels of society.

The first part of this chapter deals with the popular literature which chose anarchism as its central theme, and the second with the more prestigious literature of the time. In this latter category works by Henry James, Joseph Conrad and G.K. Chesterton will be examined.

The period under discussion was marked by a sharp expansion of a reading public hungry for light entertainment, for books which demanded little intellectual effort

and yet suited the prevailing moral outlook. In order to reach the largest possible readership, the popular fictional work, like its counterpart the emergent popular newspaper, directed its appeal to the lowest intellectual level. It was "interesting, easily read, concise and purely narrative"[1]. Consequently, the subject-matter is often lacking in depth, and scope for characterisation is impoverished. Reality is badly distorted and artistic quality suffers. Yet precisely because of the authors' main concern for popularity and hence their comparative lack of interest in authenticity, their works often throw light on popular images and thus constitute an invaluable source for study.

Serious literature, on the other hand, tries to penetrate to the core of its subject, offers richer characterisation, registers some authentic moments and generally exposes at least some of the complexities of the subject-matter. As genuine works of art, the books belonging to this category also air the least typical views of the age, however much they may manifest popular prejudices. Moreover, these works sometimes provide perceptive insights into current popular images. Jointly, popular and serious literature thus offer a wider view of anarchism and of the effects of the movement.

Anarchism was a central theme in various popular genres: in horror, detective, adventure and romantic novels and short stories. The horror novel exemplifies the public image in its clearest and most uninhibited form. The anarchist theme was used in this genre possibly more often than in any one of the other literary categories. The dominant image of the anarchist as it emerged in the press and even in works of reference provided a simple schematic drawing of a mischievous and mad criminal, to which the different narrators added idiosyncratic colouring and highlights. Yet, whereas the various portrayals of the anarchist within other genres have only the most basic traits in common, the anarchists of the horror stories appear identical in all but the smallest particulars. Admittedly, the literary

1. C.R.H. Bosanquet, "Cheap Literature", The Contemporary Review, vol. 79 (May 1901), p. 675.

conventions of the genre dictate a certain kind of presentation, yet the repeated use of this specific anarchist type indicates that the figure was credible and entrenched in the public mind. Moreover, much as the horror novel is designed to thrill and alarm, at the same time it projects certain morbid psychological states of nightmarish quality that forever beset the human mind. The nerve-racking spectacles of unusual events and unprincipled human activities mirror the awe and terror that certain inexplicable phenomena inspire. That the anarchist fell into this category implies that he set in motion various primordial fears of the monster or the dragon, and that he fed social anxieties and tensions. The horror novel was thus able to capture most succinctly the alarm experienced by the public at the appearance of anarchism.

It is for these reasons that the horror novel, more than other literary genres, subsumes and connotes the deepest and innermost reactions to anarchism. Its analysis will be followed by brief observations on the way in which other literary forms support this assessment of the anarchist, or alternatively, supplement it with further typical reactions to the subject.

The picture of the anarchist in horror stories draws striking parallels with the descriptive myth of Satan. With the gradual retreat from a religious world view in the modern era, spirits and devils were removed from daily life. Satan could not henceforth be anything more than an abstraction. He was replaced by devils in human shape; by people who incarnated his properties. The anarchist was one of these secularised devils. Direct allusions to the latter are too numerous and explicit to be overlooked. Gustave Linbach, for example, creates an immediate connection between anarchism and Satanism by entitling his novel The Azrael of Anarchy, referring thereby to the arch-anarchist in the book. The connotation is clear: the name of Azrael stands for the Angel of Death in Islam. Linbach reiterates this motif throughout the book, calling the anarchist "arch-fiend in human form"[1], and his deed a "Mephistophelian

1. Gustave Linbach, The Azrael of Anarchy (London, 1894), p. 134.

crime"[1]. Another author, Sir Robert le Camps, introduces the same association in the title of his book Desrues the Anarchist or The Devil's Son, an appellation he uses frequently all the way through the tale[2]. Another example occurs in Richard Henry Savage's The Anarchist: Davidoff, the leader of the anarchist conspiracy, is called "Hell's high priest"[3], while Carl Stein, the central anarchist, is described as "The apostle of Destruction"[4]. Likewise, the anti-anarchist hero of An Apostle of Freedom names the anarchists interchangeably "Satans", "devils", or "armoury of Satan"[5]. Hartmann's crew in Hartmann the Anarchist are labelled the "fiends of destruction"[6].

Alongside this straightforward labelling, the authors purposely invested the figure of the anarchist with traditional devillish habits and intentions and ascribed to him characteristics which were always associated with the demonic world. In fact, the personality sketch of the anarchist is almost a paradigm of the character of the arch-rebel.

What makes Satan represent the essence of evil is his unconditional independence from all moral precepts or norms and his undeviating pursuit of wickedness and sin - all in order to rule the world and refashion it in his own image. As his mirror image, the anarchist in literature exhibits the same demeanour and propensities. His activities reveal an obsessive, ruthless dedication to the invention of instruments and stratagems with the aim of gaining unlimited power and foisting anarchy upon an unsuspecting and defenceless society. When all is permitted the human imagination is seen to run wild and produce the most monstrous plans.

To reveal the full scope of evil in action the anarchist's modus operandi was divided into various stages, each individually providing an immediate aim, while in combination serving as the ladder up which the anarchist would climb towards his final triumph. A prime prerequisite for

1. ibid., p. 12.
2. Robert le Camps, Desrues the Anarchist or The Devil's Son (London, n.d.)
3. Richard Henry Savage, The Anarchist (London, 1894), p. 81.
4. ibid., p. 397.
5. Edwin Hughes, An Apostle of Freedom (Bristol, n.d. 1895 ?), p. 124.
6. E. Douglas Fawcett, Hartmann the Anarchist (London, 1893), p. 81.

the success of any plan was a thorough disguise of identity. Unsuspected, the anarchist could freely pursue his intentions. Indeed, in order to hide the evil in him the anarchist played the wolf in sheep's clothing, thus assuming the traditional posture of Satan: that of the impostor. And if he wished to arrive at a position of power he had first to gain a high status within the established hierarchy as well as the confidence of its members.

Sir Dunston Gryme in The Azrael of Anarchy acquires a privileged status through being appointed doctor to the Royal Household and receiving a knighthood. As a well-known doctor he establishes cordial relations with the upper classes whose very obliteration he simultaneously wishes and indeed initiates. His deception is twofold. He betrays not only his social peers, but also his profession. He is supposed to heal and save lives, but in reality he is an agent of death. His aristocratic patients, instead of showing signs of recovery, die under his care, mysteriously bequeathing all their fortunes to him.

The anarchist is by no means a menace to the leisured classes alone, but a traitor to the very class whose welfare he pretends to safeguard: a bomb planted in a match factory at his instigation accidentally explodes, killing the workers in the vicinity. His ultimate insidiousness concerns his own dedicated anarchist circle: he exploits its members and then, the moment they can no longer serve his purpose, cruelly dismisses them or has them disposed of. Despite his many wretched practices, almost no one suspects him. The trust and esteem in which he is held are such that he is called on to supervise the army and the navy in an attempt to halt the approaching cholera epidemic. An ironic situation is created - recurrent in Satanical stories - of calling upon an angel and getting a devil in disguise[1].

1. The situation is even more ironic when viewed in the light of the Medieval belief that demons were responsible for disease.

A similar dissembler is Carl Stein, the central figure of the novel The Anarchist. Like Dunston, he ascends the social hierarchy by means of his expertise in disguise as well as by his academic skills. He has acquired fame as the attaché of German embassies, a position which later enables him to become the tutor of the wealthy American heiress Evelyn Hartley, and the cataloguer of her extensive library. In addition, he pretends to be naive and harmless, an image which induces mothers to entrust their daughters to him. Almost all the characters in the novel hold him in great esteem. Only the reader is aware that Stein is contriving to take possession of Evelyn's fortunes and of her soul. The anarchist's true nature is sometimes made apparent through the workings of his mind. Like Shakespeare's Iago, he occasionally ventures an aside, communicating his foul innermost intentions. His snake-like hiss can almost be heard as the reader turns page after page, following his schemes to marry off Evelyn and her mother to men who would be under his absolute control. Only towards the end of the book is his sly malevolence revealed.

Even the idealistic anarchist who at first seems "resolute, sincere" and innocent to the author of Hartmann the Anarchist soon proves to be almost as diabolic as the rest. When he and his anarchist crew venture an appearance in the democratic society of England, they adopt the mark of 'Jekyll'. In this environment they are "mild enough, courteous and argumentative". But deep inside they are "dogmatic and brutal"[1]. Once in control of the newly-invented spaceship Attila, which empowers the anarchist to bomb and wreck civilization from above, he is "invariably a terrible monster".

Related to this ability to deceive was the anarchist's amazing elusiveness. Hartmann vanishes unhurt after an attempt to assassinate the German Crown Prince, who is on a visit to London. Later he miraculously escapes from a ship which sinks together with all the other passengers. For ten years, he is supposed to have been dead, during which

1. Fawcett, p. 64.

time he occupies himself with the creation of the most destructive machine on earth.

In addition to his secretive and treacherous personality, the anarchist was portrayed as highly intelligent, and the master of extensive scholarly knowledge. This contributed further to his growing Satanic status. In the popular Medieval tradition Satan was always associated with scholarship. But Satan abused knowledge and only used it to bring tragedy on mankind. It was he who tempted Eve to take from the forbidden tree of knowledge - an event which exemplifies the first rebellion of Man against God and his consequent loss of innocence. Punishment for the rebellion was visited on the whole of humanity. Man could henceforth be redeemed only after death. Thus, in the Middle Ages, scientific inquiry outside the realm of accepted Christian dogma was associated with Satan's rebellious quest for knowledge and amounted to the wish to be on a par with God - a repetition of the original sin. To aspire to know the secret designs of the universe inevitably led to the submission of the soul to the arch-demon, or Mephistopheles, as he was frequently called in this context. Consonant with this, popular fancy believed that magic and witchcraft - both the province of the Devil and his cohorts - constituted the daily activities of scientists. Experimentation in both chemistry and Alchemy, which was visually exciting, substantiated this belief. Both were identified with black magic and hereticism. Laboratories were imagined to be places where evil intentions were brewed and solutions found.

In accordance with the characteristics traditionally attributed to Satan, all the anarchist profiles in the horror stories display extraordinarily sharp intelligence and attributes of learning. Their scientific investigations are incessantly pursued. The widespread recognition of their capabilities, as was shown earlier, allows them to advance steadily towards the achievement of their immediate and final aims. Sir Dunston Gryme would not have been appointed doctor to the Royal Household had he not been recognised as the most talented and brilliant medical man in the Empire. Similarly, Professor Stein is portrayed as being

a "Singular man" whose "ability is marvellous"[1]. He is lauded in scholarly circles and "his mental activity and singularly graceful cosmopolitan manners" give him distinction in every society[2].

Their learning, like Satan's, is steeped in the supernatural. Most of them are doctors, chemists or scientists, all intimately connected with magic. In his childhood Gryme sat at the feet of Indian Fakirs who taught him the mysteries of magic arts like hypnotism and clairvoyance, and led him to his deep and abiding interest in medicine. He subsequently studied in London and Paris, specialising in toxicology, vaccinations and restoration of life by electrical means. The atmosphere in his laboratory recalls occultism and witchcraft. Like any alchemist, he deepens and widens his intimate knowledge of the terra incognita in order to discover a chemical combination which will finally ensure the everlasting life.

However, knowledge is not sought for its own sake by the anarchist in literature, nor is it a manifestation of a quest for truth, but in the footsteps of Satan, it is a means to rule the world. He uses knowledge and technology to destroy peaceful human existence, and whenever possible calls superhuman powers to his aid. Being in possession of esoteric or secret lore renders him almost omniscient. Gryme's pernicious operations in the outer world already confirm his satanic ability to inflict death. Still, he aspires to sit on God's own throne, commanding both life and death. Finally his life research bears fruit: he discovers the elixir of life. The door is now open for his ultimate triumph.

The wheels of the plot of An Apostle of Freedom are themselves moved by the anarchist's relentless determination to obtain the results of a chemical experiment which will produce the most modern and sophisticated bomb yet invented. The bomb itself is light, safe and easy to operate. Its secret is known only to the story-teller, himself a medical

1. Savage, p. 22.
2. ibid., p. 24.

student whose hobby is chemical research, and to his professor. The anarchists kidnap the professor and his daughter with whom the hero - the narrator - is in love, so as to blackmail him to surrender his all-powerful results by threatening to kill his beloved Valentine.

The anarchists in Hartmann the Anarchist illustrate the way in which high technology can be abused. Hartmann is an engineer, "a prodigy of intellectual vigour"[1], and the inventor of an extremely hard and light silvery grey substance which constitutes the primary material from which the airship Attila is made. This monstrous invention not only endows the anarchists with absolute control of people from on high, but also with the power of mass killing. The airship is supplemented with infernal machines, the most sophisticated of which is an electrical eye which can spread havoc and death on helpless people below.

The anarchist's impressive knowledge and intelligence are thus seen as inseparable from the bizarre, the supernatural and the macabre. They are morally corrosive and merely ways to accumulate more and more power, inevitably leading to atrocities and eventual disaster. Some of the anarchists command unnatural powers over other people through their scholarship - powers which suppress any of their opponents' instincts to disobey or retaliate. From whatever source they derive this potency - hypnotism or some other method - their position becomes that of Mephistopheles who induced or bewitched people to indulge in sin.

Sir Dunston Gryme assumes this role of the fiend in relation to his collaborators as well as his victims. His hypnotic powers enable him to dominate with irresistible despotism the other anarchists - the Faustian figures in this case - who eventually try to resist the increasing severity of his heinous crimes, and to keep a magnetic hold on the rich Lady Ellice who is under his medical care. Professor Stein of The Anarchist is explicitly referred to as "the Mephisto behind the modern Faust"[2], and Prince

1. Fawcett, p. 26.
2. Savage, p. 308.

Oborski, under great psychological pressure, becomes the slave of this "genius of Destruction"[1]. Hartmann, on the other hand, although the leader of the anarchists, is more of a Faustian figure. He was caught under the influence of the German anarchist Schwartz, who sowed in him the seeds of total hatred of society. Hartmann's mother affirms that Schwartz was "Her son's tutor in vice"[2]. Ten years later, Schwartz still accompanies him wherever he goes, exercising a permanent malign influence on him.

Subterfuge, prestige, advanced knowledge and parapsychological pressures are not the only means the anarchist employs. Two of the traditional satanic characteristics - which also became human appetites after the Fall - Greed and Lust - point him in other directions as well. Money is a way to achieve total control, and women are the instruments through which money - or as in the case of Valentine, a chemical formula - can be obtained.

As early as the second chapter of The Anarchist, Carl Stein expresses his interest in money in an aside, exclaiming "Money! money! ... In our hands it would arm us for a victorious struggle"[3]. Indeed, he is in great need of it as the success of his master-plan entirely depends on the availability of money. In fact, it is in pursuit of money that Stein many years earlier moved the centre of his operations to America. Bakunin, the spiritual father of anarchism, had suggested that in America Stein would best be able to take control and prepare for the revolution: money being the driving force there, everything could be bought at a price. His efforts now concentrate on the fortunes of Evelyn and her mother. Stein's reliance on money proves to be justified. The sum of money on which Evelyn's step-father manages to put his hands, enables him to instigate social and industrial disturbances and crimes in Cleveland.

Sir Dunston Gryme in The Azrael of Anarchy is also in great need of money. So desperate is he that he misappropriates the salaries and insurance money left by the workers for whose deaths he is responsible for his own nefarious ends: like-

1. ibid., p. 313.
2. Fawcett, p. 43.
3. Savage, p. 37.

wise the legacies left to him by his murdered patients. His grand design, just as Stein's, focuses on the riches of an heiress, in this case Lady Ellice who, like Evelyn, has fallen under the influence of a fiend.

The spirit of Satan dictates that the anarchist's attitude to women is rarely romantic or chivalrous. Lacking in emotions, most of the anarchists are incapable of constructive love, of a genuine emotional attachment. Theirs is only a cold, voluptuous lust. They have neither wives, families nor any other ties: a family environment would have made them human and more humane. Oborski, one of the few anarchists with any attachments, is betrothed to Etelka, a gypsy girl, and this when a female gypsy was a symbol of the hot-blooded licentious woman as opposed to the chaste Victorian heroine. Their marriage is very unconventional: they live separately, while she, in pursuit of him, is at the same time living with the gypsy king. Only the odd anarchists who are motivated by idealism display some warmth and consideration towards women, even if only at the last moment. This concession to feelings and moral dictates forces them to turn against their fellow anarchists, and at the same time causes the final defeat of anarchism which has always relied on the lack of ethical restraint of its members. Hartmann withdraws his allegiance to anarchism to save his mother to whom he is very much attached (a factor which automatically throws a more favourable light on him), and the anarchist from The Apostle of Freedom does likewise to save Valentine.

It is interesting, though very much in the tradition of Victorian literature, that a sexual relationship or desire between high society ladies and the anarchists is never explicitly mentioned or even implied. It is left to the unfortunate poor or the women from the lower strata of society to show what the anarchists are capable of in this domain. Only such women, out of weakness - moral or physical - are allowed to be associated sexually with anarchism. Both Gryme of The Azrael of Anarchy and Antoine of Desrues the Anarchist establish infamous houses for poor girls, in which they practise their contemptible habits. In both

cases, one girl succeeds in running away from her enforced confinement, and with the aid of the hero, eventually helps to expose the villain's misdeeds. Antoine, the more Satanic and perverse of the two, attempts to rape the escaped woman, but fails.

The authors thus leave little to the imagination. The whole range of methods and tools employed by the anarchists are catalogued. It is clear that the anarchist is wholly dark within. Some authors, however, seem to feel the need to correlate between inner essence and outer appearance, and hence give the anarchist, the non-idealist type in particular, crooked or unpleasant features. There was no modern Satanic portraiture, however, upon which these authors could draw. Unlike the Medieval world, which made Satan more corporeal by ascribing to him certain visual marks of identity such as a cloven hoof, fangs and a lean and sometimes deformed body, disbelief in concrete evil spirits in the modern world resulted in the tendency to personify Satan in his spirit rather than in his body. Given the lack of a model or archetype, those authors who insist on a physical sketch of the anarchist, usually refer to his fierce facial expression, or compare him to wild beasts. There is "a bull-dog's obstinacy and attachment" about Schwartz's face, and "the eyes were unspeakably wicked and the mouth hard and cruel"[1]. If the eyes truly mirror the soul, then it is not surprising to find that Stein had "Defiant gray eyes flashing under his waving locks"[2], and Antoine, even as a child, was "a wizened, stunted lad, with livid face, and eyes that, sparkling with malignity, shone with a tiger-like glare... like a black snake ... [and] young hydra"[3].

In most of the stories the authors make reference to the protagonist's childhood as a means of explaining his driving force or revealing the deep psychological deficiencies inherent in the anarchist child. The anarchist is either reared and indoctrinated with the seeds of hatred

1. Fawcett, p. 29.
2. Savage, p. 24.
3. le Camps, p. 2.

and envy by frustrated parents like Dunston Gryme, has embittering experiences like Carl Stein, or is simply possessed by an evil spirit from an early age like Antoine. Whatever the cause, the allusion to the background of the anarchist establishes his long-standing connection with vice and explains his fallen nature. Blind rage, hatred, jealousy and spite, unruly egotism and vain visions, as with Satan, are certain to lead to unbridled aspirations and thus to moral degeneration and a career of crime, in other words, to anarchism. Only rarely is the anarchist impelled by idealism, however misguided. Only if this is the case, is he likely to recover his humanity and renounce his anarchist ambitions.

While sharing some of the characteristics of the master villains, most of the other anarchists in these tales are anonymous secondary figures with no distinct identity or personality. They constitute a collective entity projecting a single face - that of an awesome conspiracy of concentrated evil against modern society. Their strength lies in their unity. Their organisation, which is rigidly hierarchical, highly centralised, and occasionally conspicuously undemocratic , operates efficiently. Its agents, though invisible, abound. They appear out of nowhere and disappear as mysteriously, transferring important and confidential information to the centre, which in turn disseminates this and other information when and to whom it is needed. In order to remain above suspicion, they conceal their identity. Interestingly, many of them are aristocrats or members of Parliament[1].

This secret organisation is a regular ingredient in the anarchist horror story. In these tales the anarchist is rarely conceived in isolation. To achieve his aim, the anarchist needs assistance. The chief anarchist is, if not the leader of the group, the key personality, the brain without which success is far less likely. However, while the other anarchists are dependent on him for the execution of their plans, he is also dependent on them: they are his army, his

1. The conspiracy in The Anarchist includes Count Oborski, in The Azrael of Anarchy Lord Berties M.P., and in The Apostle of Freedom a Marquis.

minions, and, though subordinate to him, are equally tireless demons of darkness. In some tales like The Anarchist and The Azrael of Anarchy the mastermind of the organisation uses his assistants to further his own personal ambitions. He is their baneful influence. In others, like Hartmann the Anarchist or The Apostle of Freedom, these secondary figures form a passionate, excitable, unscrupulous and uncontrollable mob, and unlike their leader, they have no idealistic motivation. Despite the variations, the moral impression the characters leave is similar in all the novels. The anarchist conspirators are explicitly marked out as "the armoury of Satan"[1]. Their manners emphasise this comparison: their meetings, in particular, evoke the atmosphere of the 'council of hell'. Furthermore, while claiming to crusade for the poor, they never persuade and educate the people to support their cause, but always work surreptitiously to bring havoc and death into the world as is appropriate to evil spirits.

In some stories the conspiracy consists of "the International, the Latin secret societies, the Republicans, anarchists, and the Slavic assassins of nihilism"[2], in others of ruffians, murderers, thieves, gamblers and pimps. Hartmann himself tells the narrator that "Every man is an outlaw from society, and most have shed blood"[3]. The members are "the maggots of civilization, the harvest of the dragon's teeth sown in past centuries, the Frankenstein's monsters of civilization which are born to hate their father". The name of the anarchist League "(even in whispers) shook with terror haughty heads though crowned and anointed"[4].

Once the characters have been established, the reader is confronted with what anarchism actually entails. The conspiracies seem about to bear fruit and everything is set for the final battle. The new order is soon to be inaugurated. At this penultimate point the reader is given a

1. Hughes, p. 124.
2. Savage, p. 67.
3. Fawcett, p. 81.
4. Savage, p. 61.

glimpse of the frightening shadow of an anarchical world. The story The Anarchist begins when social turmoil and industrial unrest are rife in America. There is much crime, accompanied by threats and demands that the rich should give up their wealth. In The Azrael of Anarchy, London is in a state of panic as the approach of calamity becomes more noticeable. Europe is seen to be undergoing an ordeal of anarchist terrorism. A few anarchists are caught and punished, but the police fail to find the source of trouble. The government is desperate and soon loses control. People's behaviour is then determined solely by the fear of contagion by the approaching cholera, aggravated by the anarchist. Theatres and churches are empty, unemployment widespread and scenes of brutality, hunger and fear are everywhere. The mood is one of total demoralisation. In Hartmann the Anarchist , too, the unleashing of "pandemonium on earth" is preceded by a revolutionary situation and the renewal of anarchist outrages. These disturbances and upheavals are seen to be symptomatic of the anarchist predicament, but worse still is anticipated. Where anarchism prevails, a world of unfathomable evil unfolds. In The Anarchist, for instance, the "chaotic mass" - incited by Stein to strike for its rights - responds in frenzy and commotion. In Hartmann the Anarchist, the whole of London is in flames.

In most of these books, the story's hero appears on the scene to save his country or the world and to destroy all threat at the very last moment. His character emphasises the difference between a moral person and an anarchist. He is always shown to be bold, kind, affectionate and loyal; he fights for the right causes and is ready to sacrifice his life for the sake of humanity in general as well as for the other positive characters in the book. He is very intelligent, and can therefore see through the anarchists. He is the real friend of the people, the defender of the workers' rights and the guardian of law and order; in fact, everything the anarchist is not. In this way, the manichean dichotomy between good and evil is preserved. The long struggle between them ends in the defeat of evil, and the triumph of good. What is important is

that, like Satan - and the reader subsequently - the anarchist realises that he is unable to destroy or take control of the world.

The horror story's correlation between the anarchist and Satan - a comparison which was also often made outside fiction - signifies that the living anarchist was considered to be everything that Satan personified, defiling all moral precepts and involving himself in a dark web of crime and vengeance; in short, he was an implacable and inhuman enemy of society. The recurrent placing of this small-scale Satan in the dreadful setting of the horror story, as if it were his natural environment, suggests the enormity of the threat the anarchist appeared to constitute for the society of the time. Nothing less than the existence of civilization was seen to be at stake. The pages are crimson with the blood of the anarchists' victims and are full of the sense of devastation that the realisation of anarchism would precipitate.

The meek and powerless anarchist of the real world became invested with the awesome attribute of omnipotence he was given in literature. The most dangerous anarchist, according to the horror novels, is not the individual bomb-thrower driven to action by passionate beliefs, but the calculating scientist whose bloody adventures are sustained by dangerous and ubiquitous conspirators whose plans are on the verge of success. And his danger does not lie in his aims alone but in his ingenious advance towards his goal. His cunning initiative, his ingenuity and resourcefulness magnify each anarchist individual from a common criminal to a Machiavellian plotter. His mastery of disguise means that he may be a prominent personality or merely the next-door neighbour; his ability to influence and exert control over men - and women in particular - invests him with occult powers; and in terms of material wealth, endless sources of finance become available to him with which he can also subjugate anarchist groups to his own ends. Though these stories' endings reassure the reader, the repeated choice of this special pattern leaves room for a residual fear that the anarchist might yet reappear and perhaps triumph.

It can be argued that these authors used the anarchists in their tales simply because the popular image of the anarchist readily lent itself to the Satanic pattern, and hence to the horror story. Besides, such a fusion had all the ingredients to attract and satisfy readers. It kept them in constant suspense and produced even more alarming effects than mere thrillers. Since anarchists naturally gave rise to exaggerated responses, the events teemed with fantasy and the agents of terror had the touch of the supe-human about them. Nevertheless, the identification of the anarchist with Satan and the incorporation of the resulting creature in horror tales was not simply a reflection of literary convenience and aesthetic judgement, but most probably also a way of disseminating anti-anarchist propaganda. Indeed, anarchist tales differed from other horror stories in one important respect - in the realistic value invested in them. After all, the anarchist was not a supernatural imaginary creature, but a human being in the real world, despite his fiend-like qualities. Nor was he a neutral protagonist generating only a momentary response, but someone who was also discussed and debated outside literary circles. Moreover, the attribution of satanism to a representative of a hated, stereotyped group was not incidental but an old political weapon. The image of the Jew, another target of stereotypical abuse and deep-seated hatred and fear, was often that of Satan almost to the minutest detail.

That these books illustrate a theme as much as tell a story, and that at least in a number of cases the interest the author had in anarchism played an important part in his choice of subject-matter, is evidenced by the explicit personal opinions and inimical commentary on the nature of the real contemporary movement that are to be found in the books. In the preface to The Anarchist, Richard Savage declares his novel to be "The story of active Anarchism", "a chronicle of the present time", which might soon become the most central political issue. "Socialism and Communism moving blindly on parallel lines are closely followed up by the were-wolf of anarchy", he warns. "This red propaganda has crossed

racial and national dividing lines, and watching the troubles of the weaker governments for propitious moments - anarchism has emerged from the shadows of midnight conspiracy and now fights boldly in the open!" He predicts that "as it leaves the shadows, anarchy must exhibit its true colors, move under its real leaders, and have an open and avowed creed! ... It needs money, skilled and plausible emissaries, and must, on the line of its battle against society, deal with the life of women - with the schemes of the 'salon' - with active political effort and with all the priceless interests it would destroy", he continues, promising to sketch its possible preparatory manoeuvres in the following pages. He further warns that the future course of anarchism "will be bold" and suggests that "its vicious attacks must be firmly and promptly met"[1]. Another instance is Fawcett. Although he professes his aim in writing Hartmann the Anarchist to be merely "to throw light only on one of its [the world's] more romantic corners", he sets the story within a discursive framework in which he, as narrator, is able to prove to a communist-anarchist journalist that the latter is totally wrong[2].

Furthermore, some of these authors even suggest actual ways of quelling anarchism. Richard Savage proposes that "the octopus feelers of an insane revolt against all law which guards Private Right" should be extirpated by "Organised cosmopolitan repression" which would be "the stern answer of the civilized world to the dark creed of Destruction"[3]. Sir Robert le Camps maintains that "no common death by rope or guillotine should be theirs!", and suggests: "why not test that nobleness of courage by some of the tortures of the Middle Ages: breaking upon the wheel and so forth"[4].

Notwithstanding the scant reliability of the content of horror novels, those comments increased the likelihood that the stories would be accepted as authentic and that

1. Savage, p. 3.
2. Fawcett, p. 214.
3. Savage, p. 4.
4. le Camps, p. 10.

the message implied in them of the menace of anarchism would be taken seriously.

Each of the other popular genres - the detective, spy, adventure and romantic novels and short stories - uses the figure of the anarchist in accordance with its own literary requirements. Nonetheless, his portrayal in all of them approximates to the popular conception. The anarchist is uniformly the villain. The seal of moral disapproval is unequivocally set on him. The variations - in terms of both character and genre - can be explained by evil constantly assuming new forms.

The detective novel explores a particular kind of warfare between a detective - the political and symbolical representative of law and order (although many of them are 'private eyes') - and a criminal - the disruptive element in society. The confrontation between them is presented as a trial of strength and intelligence; the more fearsome, daring, unscrupulous and quick-witted the criminal, the more acute the struggle, and the more admirable the detective's victory; the tension increases and the drama heightens. The anarchist, whose very nature is thought to harbour these elements as he acts out his natural role of terrorist, can thrill his audience far more than the ordinary criminal. But again, since the culprit is an authentic figure taken from real life, this kind of presentation of his character has wider political and moral implications than is usually the case in detective stories. The rivalry between the criminal and the sleuth here becomes even more explicitly a war between the forces of good and evil.

One of the first eccentric and humorous private detectives, M. Eugene Valmont, created by the popular detective story-teller, Robert Barr, is a former French police detective, now living in England, who is obsessed with and morally committed to punishing anarchists[1]. The inner circle of the anarchist International against which he is fighting

1. Robert Barr, "The Fate of the Picric Bomb" (1906) in James Nelson, ed., The Complete Murder Sampler (London, 1950).

(though from within and in disguise) is a worthy enemy - equally clever and determined. Predictably, however, the good side wins. Valmont not only manages to sabotage the anarchist plan to assassinate the King of England, but also to save one precious soul from its awful allegiance to anarchism[1].

The most famous author to look at anarchism in the context of detective literature was Robert Louis Stevenson. He seems, however, more interested in the psychology of the anarchist than in the aspect of detection and pursuit. In The Dynamiter[2] Stevenson tells the story of three English gentlemen who have neither money nor prospects. They therefore decide that they would best employ their time by becoming detectives and uncovering the clues to the countless mysteries around them. During the course of their adventures, they continually come across traces of the existence of a subterranean anarchist conspiracy. The accounts of these amateur detectives reveal the ways in which this conspiracy operates and describe the psyche of its individual members. The French anarchists, for instance, propose "to break up the drainage system of cities and sweep off whole populations with the devastating typhoid pestilence"[3]. The other anarchist suggestions are all of a similar nature. But the anarchist's all-consuming obsession is with dynamite, which is his sole source of interest and delight[4]. This fascination with the bomb and its ruinous consequences is the real and only reason for his terrorism - not "the glorious triumph of humanity" as he proclaims his aim to be[5]. Yet for all his involvement with this dangerous device, the anarchist is a notable coward, trembling paranoically at the sight of a real or imaginary policeman, and utterly hysterical at the thought of his own

1. Barr's other stories in which anarchism forms the background are "The Chemistry of Anarchy" published in the collection of his short stories The Face and the Mask (London, 1894) and "A Dynamite Explosion" in Revenge (London, 1896).
2. Published in 1885 as a second series of The New Arabian Nights called More New Arabian Nights. Quotations here are from The Dynamiter (London, 1907).
3. ibid., p. 166.
4. See Zero's confession, p. 269.
5. ibid., p. 168.

death[1]. His craven spirit indeed explains why his most favourable targets are the weaker and less fortunate members of society: "children, errand-boys, unfortunate young ladies of the poorer class and infirm old men"[2].

While some authors may have unintentionally added a touch of glamour to their characterisation of the anarchist, Stevenson's portrayal carries not a single trace of regard. On the contrary, though totally unscrupulous, Stevenson's anarchist is ridiculous and pitiful. His wickedness is coupled with senselessness and buffoonery. His threat here therefore does not stem from intelligence, courage and resourcefulness, but from his insanity and total blindness to the reality around him. He lives in a distorted world of his own, untrammelled by the moral principles and practical guidelines of the real world. What saves society from his attempted indiscriminate crimes is the sheer incompetence and clumsiness with which he conducts his affairs. Thus Stevenson makes his anarchist an even more contemptible figure than those of other novels.

It is clear that these two authors, Barr and Stevenson, were very careful to leave an unequivocal impression of anarchism. Both supplemented the action of their books with extra-literary statements to reinforce their respective views. Barr cautions the public not to suppose that "anarchists are a band of lunatics"[3]. He goes on to argue that there are

> "able brains among them, and these born leaders as naturally assume control in the underground world of anarchy as would have been the case if they had devoted their talents to affairs of ordinary life. They were men whose minds, at one period, had taken the wrong turning".

Furthermore, according to him, "Anarchists are not poverty-stricken individuals, as most people think, for many of them hold excellent situations, some occupying positions of great trust, which is rarely betrayed"[4].

1. See M'Guire's reaction, pp. 173-74.
2. ibid., p. 171.
3. Barr, "The Fate of the Picric Bomb", p. 288.
4. ibid., p. 291.

Barr also used the detective novel to point out what he conceived to be the deficiencies of law enforcement in Britain. The main plot is preceded by a tale which demonstrates that anarchist crimes are partly the result of the ineptitude and leniency of the British police force. In Barr's opinion, one of their mistakes was to stick to the letter of the law when the law itself is not strict enough to meet the anarchist threat. "England is the one spot on the map of Europe", Barr complains, "where an anarchist cannot be laid by the heels unless there is evidence against him that will stand the test of open court"[1]. This state of affairs accounts for Valmont's preoccupation with the capture of anarchists and for his self-imposed role of judge over the anarchists.

Stevenson, too, uses his book as a platform for his views. His aversion to anarchism is crystallised in a statement by the detective Somerset to Zero, the arch-anarchist: "I look on you with loathing, like a toad; my flesh creeps with physical repulsion; my soul revolts against the sight of you"[2]. Through the same person, Stevenson gives the reason for his attitude: "I always thought stupidity was funny; I now know otherwise; and when I look upon your idiot face, laughter rises within me like a deadly sickness, and the tears spring up into my eyes as bitter as blood"[3].

In his combination of crime and mystery, spy stories, adventure tales and romance, William le Queux smoothly incorporates anarchist villains in his work as either main or minor characters. His plots follow a consistent pattern in which the anarchist engages in intrigue, camouflaging his dark deeds - a practice which, as has been shown, was thought to be second nature to the anarchist. His main

1. ibid., p. 282.
2. Stevenson, p. 193.
3. ibid., p. 276. It is interesting to note that nine years later he wrote to his cousin, R.A.M. Stevenson: "There is a new something or other in the wind, which exercises me hugely: anarchy, - I mean, Anarchism... People whose conduct is inexplicable to me, and yet their spiritual life higher than that of most. This is just what the early Christians must have seemed to the Romans". Letter dated Sept. 1894, in Sidney Colvin, ed., The Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson (London, 1899), vol. 2, p. 358.

victim is often a woman, attracted to anarchism through a mixture of naivety, malevolent influence and blackmail as in The Devil's Dice[1], or as a result of feelings of revenge against the authorities as in The Day of Temptation[2]. She is saved from the devil's clutches by the hero-narrator who, towards the end, becomes aware of his beloved's subjection to anarchism. The anarchist, predictably, pays for his sins.

Le Queux's portrayal of the anarchist, and his judgement of him, were no different from those of other contemporary authors. However, this prolific writer indirectly highlighted an important dimension of the public attitude towards anarchism: namely, the tendency on the part even of those who sanctioned certain revolutionary struggles, not to include anarchists within their sympathy. The attitude to the Russian revolutionaries best illustrates this discriminatory approach. Like many others in Britain, le Queux singled out the Tsarist regime as oppressive, violent and unjust, and accordingly made allowances for its revolutionary opposition[3]. The nihilists who abound in his books and are made to represent all the Russian revolutionaries, are sometimes good and sometimes bad, but not violent nor immoral by nature[4]. Indeed, many of them eventually forsake the revolutionary cause. Moreover, the nihilists are not, as Russian agents stigmatise them, "frenzied enthusiasts who seek to reform society and reconstitute their country by the aid of dynamite and bombshells"[5], but ordinary well-wishing people who want Russia to be more like England. By contrast, the anarchists are merely villains with no lofty ideological motivation. In fact, they are not even considered political animals at all.

1. William le Queux, The Devil's Dice (London, 1896).
2. William le Queux, The Day of Temptation (London, 1899).
3. Even Harold Brust, the police officer whose hostility to revolutionaries in general and anarchists in particular is conspicuous in his memoirs, adopts a softer line when referring to Russian revolutionaries. Harold Brust, I Guarded Kings (London, n.d. 1935?), p. 86.
4. See Guilty Bonds (London, 1891); Strange Tales of a Nihilist (London, 1892) (The 1896 edition was known as A Secret Service subtitled... being Strange Tales of a Nihilist); The Czar's Spy (London, 1905) and The Great Plot (London, 1907?).
5. William le Queux, Strange Tales of a Nihilist (London, 1892), p. 85.

There were other authors who supported the Russian revolutionaries and who tended to think of them all as nihilists[1]. Interestingly, however, the writers who disapproved of the Russian underground movement often chose anarchists rather than nihilists to represent the revolutionary archetype[2], while the opposite case of books favouring the Russian cause and portraying the anarchist as a hero, are much rarer[3]. Nihilists were also subjected to abuse in literature - as le Queux indeed protested[4], but, unlike the anarchists, their struggle at least won some measure of sympathy in various popular books, which on occasion even verged on active support.

In le Queux's romances the anarchist was used to introduce adventure. In other romances he illustrated a moral point. Writing in 1887, the author of The New Antigone, William Barry, still feared the anarchists' moral dynamite more than their bombs[5]. He therefore directed his attack not against their tactics but against their moral and social principles, and showed how poisonous and disruptive they were. Throughout this traditional three-volume novel, the author uproots anarchist ideas, and demands from his characters religious resignation and acceptance of conformist precepts. At the end of the book the heroine, who until then has been living a life of sin under the influence of her anarchist father, opens her eyes to the light and understands the correct and just order of the world. Her father stands for agnosticism, the abolition of the monarchy and Parliament, the equality of the sexes and free love. The modern Antigone, realising above all the horrible effect

1. See for instance the story The Nihilist by Perceval Gibbon, who emphasised the Tsarist regime's responsibility for the activities of the revolutionaries, although the representative of the regime here is not portrayed as totally abject. (The Strand Magazine, vol.32 (Dec. 1906), pp. 772-78.)
2. See the serial "The Wandering Romanoff" by Bart Kennedy in the Evening News, starting 2 Aug. 1900 for three weeks. In a trailer disguised as a news item, the paper declared that its aim in publishing the story was to teach "What anarchy is, and how it may be met and conquered". (2 Aug. 1900), p. 3. In fact, what it actually did was to drive home the point, through the example of the anarchist villain, that it is far better to accept one's fate than attempt to change it.
3. In The Anarchists, Vizetelly pointed out that also the "average English journalist" tended to discriminate in favour of all nihilists (p. 295).
4. Le Queux, Strange Tales, p. 1.
5. William Barry, The New Antigone (London, 1887).

of the violation of the divine law of marriage, expiates her sins by leaving her devoted lover to become a nun and to practise the virtues of Christianity.

Barry was a Catholic priest who preached against lax morals and the desertion of faith. Meeting with Fabians and reading revolutionary literature only served to reinforce his beliefs in the teachings of Jesus[1] and in the danger of excessive freedom for the soul[2]. Later in his career he used anarchism in his sermons as the best way to illustrate the harmful consequences of rejecting the life of the spirit. In his concern for the poor he asserted: "we cannot hope for better things by throwing in our lot with Jacobins, Anarchists, Nihilists, who strike at random and give to injustice a colour for its martial law"[3]. For him anarchism was a general term for revolt, lasciviousness, effeminacy, cruelty and vain visions, which inevitably led to revolution and "the fury of murder and massacre"[4]. The New Antigone fully illustrated this theme.

In contrast to the novels, some of the short stories concerned with anarchism are set in a world of misery and oppression. And yet the actual number of authors who justified the anarchist reaction to such a predicament, or who alternatively selected anarchists to play the role of the victims, was, as with the novelists, extremely small. Conversely, many capitalised on the popular conception of anarchism to prove that violence never pays, whether or not the economic and political situation is to blame. The anarchist in these stories is the aggressor, the subversive element in society whether he is the corruptor and eventual killer of a pure and well-intentioned young woman as in Grant Allen's "The Dynamiter's Sweetheart"[5], the malevolent husband and father as in "An Anarchist" by Eugène Moret[6], or the accursed young man as in "The Devil of The Prince" by

1. William Barry, Thoughts for Freethinkers (London, n.d. 1905?), p. 22.
2. William Barry, Memories and Opinions (London, 1926), p. 178.
3. William Barry, Thoughts for Freethinkers, p. 22.
4. William Barry, Literature (London, 1912), p. 17.
5. The Strand Magazine, vol. 8 (1894), pp. 137-47.
6. ibid., vol. 7 (1894), pp. 339-47 (translated from the French).

Headon Hill[1]. In none of them is anarchism a logical consequence of a socio-political background. It is seen either as a form of expression for a man of evil nature or the result of drink and subversive propaganda, or of blackmail and intimidation.

Ouida[2], known for her sympathy with and interest in the poor and oppressed, especially in Italy, was one of the few writers who tried to explain the circumstances that led to the creation of anarchism. In her story "The Anarchist"[3] she points out that harsh and arbitrary treatment like that inflicted by the rich and powerful on one innocent Italian boy is most likely to make others like him into anarchists. Ironically, the boy she uses to illustrate the point was in reality thought to have been an anarchist, when in fact this was not the case. She thus perhaps betrays her own prejudices that only a person free of all traces of anarchism can be accepted by the readers as completely innocent and therefore arouse their sympathy. The underlying assumption seems to be that anarchism is something rather negative which one would be better off without.

Yet right the way through this story Ouida shows her awareness of the victimisation the label of 'anarchist' provoked. This stigma borne by the unfortunate Italian boy in the story made him the victim not only of the enemies of the downtrodden but also of the poor themselves[4]. The theme of the image's effects was also used by Philip Gibbs, Joseph Conrad and others, thus illustrating the current awareness of the consequences of bearing the label[5].

1. Tit-Bits, 15 Dec. 1900 to 16 March 1901.
2. Her real name was Marie Louise de la Ramée.
3. Ouida, La Strega and Other Stories (London, 1899).
4. ibid., p. 86. For her views about the political situation in Italy and the use that was made there of the term 'anarchist' to incriminate dissenting opinion see her Views and Opinions (London, 1895), p. 194. See also the reference to her article in Ch. 4, p. 260.
5. Philip Gibbs drew attention to the manner in which the word 'anarchism' was used as a bogey in The Spirit of Revolt (London, 1908). The book tells the story of a Labour M.P. who was presumed to be a terrible revolutionary and anarchist because of his socialist sympathies. The mere mention of the word "sent shivers down" the back of his landlady (p. 3). Joseph Conrad's story "The Anarchist" is in its entirety an illustration of this theme (A Set of Six (London, 1908)).

The attention of both authors and readers was thus not drawn to the working-class anarchist attacking all forms of government and preaching his own version of the ideal society in clubs or on street corners, nor to the middle-class Tolstoyan or metaphysical rebel of the Stirnerean type. Only a mere handful of the fictional characters in fact ever champion the cause of the poor or the non-compromising radical. That the villain for one and the conspiracy for another were the recurrent foci for disparate genres and writers shows that such a scenario was generally thought to give the true picture of the anarchist movement. Moreover, as the anarchist theme was a copious well from which to quench the thirst of the expanding publishing industry, the total effect of these books must surely have been simply to strengthen already entrenched views on anarchism.

Various novels and stories tackled the phenomenon of anarchism from other angles. Some, like The Anarchists by Henry Mackay, A Girl Among The Anarchists by Isabel Meredith (pseudonym for Olivia Rossetti) and Belinda The Backwards by Salome Hocking, presented a close-up of anarchist life in its natural surroundings. Others idealised actual communities or challenged utopias expressing anarchist ideals such as The Island of Anarchy[1]. Still others incorporated real life anarchists or characters modelled on real life figures in contexts other than terrorism. Their small number, however, and the fact that taken together they did not project a coherent and positive point of view, prevented their having any significant influence.

That three of the most distinguished novelists of the time, James, Conrad and Chesterton, were also so intrigued by the subject that each devoted a full-length novel to it, gives further evidence of the contemporary fascination with anarchism. On the one hand, it suggests that the subject was thought dramatic enough to appeal to the public; and on

1. E.W., The Island of Anarchy (Reading, 1887). The problem with these is that very few of them actually identified their recommended utopian societies as anarchist even though many of the principles by which such a society would operate were similar.

the other, that the anarchist movement conveyed a sense of an intricate reality which seemed to merit detailed observation. In theory, these three writers made fewer concessions than the popular novelists to public taste and as a result their treatment of the subject adds an extra dimension to the image of the anarchist in the public eye. It is therefore instructive to examine their respective interpretations of anarchism at some length, to look closely at the aspects each preferred to develop, and at the portraits of the individual anarchists that appear in their works. It is also interesting to note to what extent each of these celebrated authors allowed his own political affiliation and sympathies to colour his representation.

In The Princess Casamassima (1886) Henry James set himself the task of writing about a sensitive individual perpetually torn between two worlds - the ordered aristocratic world of tradition, culture and social hierarchy, and the proletarian revolutionary world of rebelliousness, non-conformity, violence and a craving for freedom and equality. The objective struggle between these two worlds mirrors the drama that shapes Hyacinth's life and tormented soul. His French proletarian mother kills his aristocratic English father and later dies in prison under a life sentence. He himself is brought up by Miss Pynsent, a third-rate dressmaker, who educates him to appreciate the virtues of his noble blood. But the social environment in which he lives and with which he strongly identifies is that of his mother. He feels he is deprived of his 'rightful' share in the privileged world, and, surrounded by poverty and discontent and influenced by militant radicals, he grows into a revolutionary. He comes to believe that the people - "the slumbering lion" - are gradually awakening to redress the mistakes of the past, and he wants to participate in the approaching struggle. As a result he eventually commits himself to perpetrating an act of violence against his father's society. Yet, keen to learn and open to influences, he gradually gravitates more towards the values of

his father's universe. But there is still "no peace for him between the two currents that flowed in his nature"[1]. The conflict is only resolved at the end of the novel.

James wrote The Princess Casamassima in the middle of the 1880s, when it was becoming increasingly clear that traditional values and long-standing institutions would have to change, and that this change might be accompanied by violence. Hyacinth's dilemma was in effect the contemporary historical conflict. Europe stood at a critical crossroad, faced with what for James were two mutually exclusive paths - symbolised by Hyacinth's divided self. James saw the social dilemma as a clear cut choice between a revolutionary struggle for democracy and equality, which would consume everything, good or bad, that civilization had developed, or the preservation of the status quo. There was no middle way. Most of this book is devoted to a close examination of the alternative world, the one James personally knew less well, but which he felt loomed on the horizon.

The revolutionary forces in The Princess Casamassima are divided into two, both sharing the same world view and aims, but utterly different in temperament and activity: the one, visible and open to all who identify with the cause of the poor and unfortunate, is in effect merely a debating club; and the other, more exclusive, works underground without too much talk. James terms the first "asinine" and the second "serious". The rank and file are impotent, doing nothing substantial to hasten the revolution. This "little band of malcontents" which Hyacinth initially liked to think "large in its latent possibilities" and "its mysterious ramifications and afflictions" in fact consists of worthless cowards whose violent language supplants the reality of action. Even their talk

1. Henry James, The Princess Casamassima (London, 1972), p. 495.

is largely "palaver": "there were nights when a blast of imbecility seemed to blow over the place and one felt ashamed to be associated with so much crude fatuity and flat-faced vanity. Then every one, with two or three exceptions, made an ass of himself, thumping the table and repeating over some inane phrase which appeared for the hour to constitute the whole furniture of his mind"[1]. The "loud, contradictory, vain, and unpractical babble" consists of the refrains repeated at meetings which usually come to a close amid disorder and discord without reaching any functional conclusions. James especially emphasises their superficiality, limited vocabulary and ineffectual talk. Hyacinth can only hope that "the good they were striving for, blindly, obstructedly in a kind of eternal dirty intellectual fog, would pass from the stage of crude discussion and mere sore, sharp, tantalising desirableness into that of solid, seated reality"[2].

Poupin - the first link between Hyacinth and the revolutionary party - belongs to this ambience. His image (and self-image) is that of an ardent and skilled revolutionary, possessing all the ingredients needed to be one. A political refugee from Thiers's repression of the Paris Commune of 1871, a French patriot, and a Republican of the 1848 sort;

> "an aggressive socialist... a constructive democrat... a theorist and an optimist and a collectivist and a perfectionist and a visionary; he believed the day was to come when all the nations of the earth would abolish their frontiers and armies and custom-houses, and embrace on both cheeks and cover the globe with boulevards... where the human family would sit in groups at little tables, according to affinities, drinking coffee (not tea, par example!) and listening to the music of the spheres"[3].

1. ibid., p. 278.
2. ibid., p. 280.
3. ibid., p. 100.

His chronic state of "spiritual inflammation", his ideas that are constantly rehearsed in the same words, and his predictions about the revolutionary force "that will make the bourgeois go down into their cellars and hide, pale with fear, behind their barrels of wine and their heaps of gold"[1], at first excite Hyacinth and sharpen his defiant tendencies. He then realises that Poupin speaks "as if the great swindle practised upon the people were too impudent to be endured a moment longer"[2], while living and acting as though an immense expanse of time lies ahead of him, never trying to match his tone, his countenance of "rolling terrible eyes" and revolutionary recommendations with militant activity. In spite of the French amnesty and the fact that his sojourn in England has not been particularly distinguished by misery or suffering, he is recognised as "suffering everything for his opinions", a posture he continually attempts to maintain. Gradually his speeches, which used to thrill Hyacinth, grow to be "strangely hollow and rococo", and he himself, however pleasant, suddenly looks foolish and mediocre.

Actually right from the beginning Hyacinth is aware that the reins of the revolutionary movement are not in the hands of people like Poupin, but in those of the calibre of Paul Monument whom he met through Poupin. Monument is different from the other revolutionaries Hyacinth meets in 'The Sun and the Moon' club. Descended from a family of miners, at present a chemical expert, he looks "a distinguished young savant in the disguise of an artisan[3]. He commands the respect of the other revolutionaries who consider him capable of seeing further than most. Already at their first meeting, Hyacinth notices that he will only take an interest in important matters, and that the "criticism

1. ibid., p. 110.
2. ibid., p. 109.
3. ibid., p. 113.

of everything... took so... little of his time"[1]. As one who has good prospects he finds no personal cause for complaint, and sounding the "pathetic note" on behalf of his class seems "unbusiness-like" to him. His struggle on the side of the masses makes him neither idealise nor romanticise them. He lacks any illusions about either the rich or the poor, therefore his judgement is not clouded by wishful thinking or sentimental dreams. His analysis is cool, pragmatic and supported by statistical facts about the state of industry and labour. He is also capable of ridiculing the revolutionists themselves, even for the entertainment of the revolutionised.

Hyacinth particularly envies "the force that enabled him to sink personal sentiment where a great public good was to be attempted and yet keep up the form of caring for that minor interest"[2]. Monument shows no scruples when the furtherance of the cause is the issue. He endorses the assassination of a duke - "a very bad institution" - as "worth trying", and keeps calm at the likely fatal outcome for his friend, Hyacinth, the prospective assassin. Sensing that more stands behind his appearance, Hyacinth constantly coaxes Monument to put him in touch with the core of the movement. And his intuition is correct. When Hyacinth demonstrates a resolute and sincere determination to sacrifice himself for the cause, Monument concedes and arranges a meeting for him with the arch-revolutionary, the force behind the mysterious and thrilling anarchist conspiracy, Dietrich Hoffendahl.

Though never appearing personally in the novel, Hoffendahl's potency and compelling personality are felt almost throughout the book and consciously so. His name is uttered with deep reverence and fear. His mention generates "a contagion of excited purpose" in the club, and a feeling of elation in Hyacinth's heart. After the meeting between them the latter feels that he has just met a man who is the very incarnation of a strong plan. "You felt <u>him</u> a big chap the very moment you came into his presence"[3], Hyacinth tells

1. <u>ibid</u>., p. 400.
2. <u>ibid</u>., p. 401.
3. <u>ibid</u>., p. 333.

the Princess, "He made me see, he made me feel, he made me do, everything he wanted"[1].

Hoffendahl is the initiator and manipulator of many of the anarchist uprisings, outrages and assassinations in Europe. He is responsible for the "great combined assault, early in the sixties, which took place in four Continental cities at once", which "had done more for the social question than anything before or since"[2]. For the other anarchists, this event shook "the rotten fabric of the actual social order, and because... of the impunity, the invisibility of the persons concerned in it had given the predatory classes, had given all Europe, a shudder that had not yet subsided"[3]. Hyacinth's little job is only a very small part of what Hoffendahl came to England for; "he had in his hand innumerable other threads"[4]. Hoffendahl is the spider who weaves the anarchist web around the old order. However, he is held in high esteem not only because he constitutes the power behind the scenes, but mainly because he himself is "one of the purest martyrs of their cause, a man who had been through everything - who had been scarred and branded, tortured, almost flayed, and had never given his would-be butchers the names they wanted"[5]. Although forty people were engaged in the affair in the 60s, only he was seized and tortured and spent twelve years in a Prussian prison, after which he remained "an object of a good deal of interest to the police"[6]. Only upon meeting him does Hyacinth realise that none of the revolutionaries he knows is a first-rate man[7].

With the taking of the oath, Hyacinth enters into the "innermost sanctuary" wherein only sincerely committed revolutionaries, members of what politicians and journalists refer to as "the party of immediate action" are allowed.

1. ibid., p. 336.
2. ibid., p. 287.
3. ibid., p. 288.
4. ibid., p. 340.
5. ibid., p. 287.
6. ibid., p. 286.
7. Another revolutionary figure given detailed characterisation is Princess Casamassima, who represents those of the privileged classes whose puzzling participation in the struggle against their own class fascinated many literary minds. Her character had already been developed in Roderick Hudson eleven years earlier.

This is, in Hyacinth's words, "an immense underworld peopled with a thousand forms of revolutionary passion and devotion", organised into a dispersed yet highly efficient conspiracy like a Jesuit order[1]. The members are cut out for such a role, being canny, well-trained and ready to sacrifice their lives for the cause. They cautiously work out their way towards their target, anonymous yet knowing everything like "the great God of the believers". Their terrorist activities are designed to frighten society into believing that the exploited classes are finally united and cognizant of their strength. And although the leaders of the conspiracy themselves are well aware that it is not so, they are intent on such operations as they estimate that "every great scare was a gain for the people"[2].

Apparently, James gave the anarchist movement much credit, if only by identifying it with the revolutionary orbit, with the forces of change. However, the object of his respect was not the visible section, the foreign clubs in London whose revolutionism he judged as rather futile. He had respect for the "hole-and-corner" side of anarchism of which only rumours were heard and glimpses seen; a world about which he, like anybody else, could only speculate. Particularly admirable appeared the commitment of people like Hoffendahl. They were to him remarkable - intelligent, iron-willed and determined. Indeed, the more a character involved himself in the subterranean cadre, the more James portrayed him as positive and of integrity. But this world also terrified him, as it posed a threat to everything he held valuable. James was convinced that the "sinister anarchic underworld" was indifferent to the great achievements of man: "The monuments and treasures of art, the great palaces and properties, the conquests of learning and taste, the general fabric of civilisation"[3]. He feared that Hoffendahl "would cut up the ceilings of the Veronese into strips, so that every one might have a little piece"[4].

1. ibid., p. 335.
2. ibid., p. 292.
3. ibid., p. 406.
4. ibid., p. 407.

His fear echoed a real and major concern of contemporary radical aesthetes for the fate of art during and subsequent to the bids of the masses for rights. They were afraid that the new order would not appreciate aesthetic sensibility and refinement, and would rather announce the rule of the mob's taste. The burning of the Louvre at the time of the Paris Commune seemed to betoken the destructive and brutal, if justified, force of the underprivileged, which when unleashed would only leave in its wake ruins of what were before monuments to the imagination and creativity of mankind. Considering art and culture the most valuable things that civilisation had produced - capable of ennobling and even compensating for misery, harshness and deprivation - James conceived their destruction as fatal to humanity.

James appreciated the validity of Hyacinth's tormented conflict and recognised "the general sordid struggle, the weight of the burden of labour, the ignorance, the misery and the vice"[1] which were to a large degree the responsibility of those thanks to whom the world is less of a "bloody sell" and life "more of a lark". He also realised the need for change, but objected to the price to be paid. He considered it too high, therefore unwelcome. A decision taken in favour of revolution was not posed by him as immoral or a deliberately wicked choice, but a miscalculation or unconcern for the things he mostly revered. The Princess Casamassima is a testimony of his hope that the world of art and the treasures of civilisation, symbolised by Europe - the source of James's inspiration - would be strong enough to ward off the revolutionary attack.

James gradually leads Hyacinth towards thoughts and conclusions similar to his own. It is, however, too late for Hyacinth to change his mind: the pledge has already been given. He can only resolve his dilemma by not taking sides; and as staying alive means a decision one way or the other, he commits suicide. James thus saves civilisation from the affliction of one sensitive soul. But James did not offer a political alternative. That was not his aim.

1. ibid., p. 15.

What he did was to affirm his dissatisfaction with both the present state of things and with anarchism.

In order to make his tale an authentic and pulsing human scene", he walked the streets of London in search of impressions and perceptions which would not have been his, had he conducted his research from the drawing room and writing desk. Interested in the life of the people and intrigued by "subterraneous politics", he recalled "never missing an opportunity to add a drop, however small, to the bucket of my impressions"[1]. His familiarity, however limited, with the anarchist scene in the London of the early '80s is often apparent: the individuals he describes were to be found among the ranks of the malcontents[2], and Bakunin's idea of a dual anarchist organisation with two different functions was advanced by Kropotkin himself at the time. The Princess Casamassima is to be seen as a dispassionate and non-malicious attempt at unveiling the forces which were working "beneathe the vast smug surface" with the aim of reaching a semblance of revolutionary politics. Writing about a clandestine political movement, James believed, is "fertile in revelations of character" and "it contains inevitably the seeds of an interesting psychological drama"[3]. Indeed, neither the real revolutionaries, nor the tamer anarchists fitted the stereotypes. The protag-

1. ibid., p. 29.
2. ibid., p. 30. It is even speculated that James had met Peter Kropotkin. See Oscar Cargill, "The Princess Casamassima", PMLA, vol. 71. (March 1956), p. 102. Several attempts have been made to identify real people who served as models for James's fictional anarchists, Hoffendahl and the Princess in particular. John Most has been suggested as a possible model. See for instance W.H. Tilley, "The Background of The Princess Casamassima", University of Florida Monographs. Humanities., No. 5 (Fall 1960).
3. James's review of the French translation of Turgenev's Virgin Soil in The Nation (N.Y.), 26 April 1877. His presentation of anarchism did not win the popularity James expected. He expressed his disappointment in a letter to W.D. Howells, 2 Jan. 1888 (Percy Lubbock, ed., The Letters of Henry James (London, 1920), vol. 1, p. 136.) It is interesting that Robert Louis Stevenson considered the book one of James's best novels (letter from Stevenson to James, Nov. 1887 in Janet A. Smith, ed., Henry James and Robert Louis Stevenson (London, 1948), p. 166). Henry James, for his part, praised The Dynamiter and remarked that it offered "the wonderful in the frankest, most delectable form". (Henry James, "Robert Louis Stevenson", Century Magazine, vol. 153 (April 1888), p. 15.).

onists of his book are neither devilish nor corrupt; and although not fully developed, they are not reduced to one-dimensional cardboard characters all exactly alike. Each was portrayed as human, with his own individualistic mental and physical characteristics. In this way James's treatment of the anarchists was rare in the literary world.

James wrote The Princess Casamassima when only the early manifestations of the anarchist movement in Britain were exposed to view. His account of anarchism, therefore, did not only express what he imagined it to be, but also presented his evaluation of its potential development and prospect. Conrad and Chesterton, writing their novels about anarchism two decades later, had the benefit of experience and of hindsight. Their evaluation was fashioned by what they knew - apart from what they felt - about the fortunes of the movement. For James, society was divided into two distinct camps, each representing an equally weighty and viable historical trend - conservatism and anarchism respectively. The clash between them seemed to him imminent and mandatory. Conrad and Chesterton were more cynical; their world was more confused and not so perspicuously divided, and anarchism in their books was no longer a leader or even a partner in the revolutionary forces. For both of them the visible and clandestine cadres of anarchism were equally impotent and powerless to alter society. No anarchism at the end of the first decade of the 20th century seemed to them able to engineer a conspiracy on the scale or of the quality of Hoffendahl's.

By the same token, anarchist characters in these books were scrutinized from a different angle than that which James chose to examine some of his anarchist figures. No longer did the anarchists' ideological battle, their moral dilemma and the impetus behind their struggle fall under serious observation. Instead, the two writers concentrated on the anarchist image. Apparently, the image seemed to them to be the most essential identifying mark of anarchism at the time. Conrad tended to focus on the anarchists' self-image and Chesterton more on the public image of anarchism.

Conrad's The Secret Agent (1907) recounts the reaction of an array of individuals to their mental and physical surroundings; in this case London during and against the background of the Greenwich explosion. Most of the dramatis personae are divided into those who belong to the institutional, formal world of the British government, the police, and foreign embassies, and those who belong to anarchist circles. In accordance with the subject-matter of this thesis, the next section is concerned with the second group of characters, the anarchists.

On examination, each of the five anarchist figures in the book presonifies a possible and identifiable anarchist type and approach to means and ends. Yet despite the variations, every portrait is presented as a miniature of the anarchist entity as a whole.

Karl Yundt, the least important anarchist character in the book, represents the propagandist of terrorist acts, the "actor on platforms, in secret assemblies, in private interviews"[1]. He is "the all but moribund veteran of dynamite wars", "the terrorist", as he chooses to call himself.

> "'I have always dreamt', he mouthed, fiercely, 'of a band of men absolute in their resolve to discard all scruples in the choice of means, strong enough to give themselves frankly the name of destroyers, and free from the taint of that resigned pessimism which robs the world. No pity for anything on earth, including themselves, and death enlisted for good and all in the service of humanity - that's what I would have liked to see'"[2].

Yet this

> "famous terrorist had never in his life raised personally as much as his little finger against the social edifice. He was no man of action; he was not even an orator of torrential eloquence, sweeping the masses along in the rushing noise and foam of a great enthusiasm"[3].

His passion worn out, he rather

1. Joseph Conrad, The Secret Agent (London, 1971), p. 47.
2. ibid., p. 43.
3. ibid., p. 47.

> "took the part of an insolent and venomous evoker of sinister impulses which lurk in the blind envy and exasperated vanity of ignorance, in the suffering and misery of poverty, in all the hopeful and noble illusions of righteous anger, pity and revolt"[1].

The appearance of this hypocritical demagogue gives away his inner disposition. He looks "old and bald, with a narrow, snow-like wisp of a goatee hanging limply from his chin"[2]; his extinguished eyes reflect an extraordinary expression of "underhand malevolence". The movement of his deformed hand suggests "the effort of a moribund murderer summoning all his remaining strength for a last stab".

Ossipon receives no better treatment. He is a writer of literary propaganda; a "wandering lecturer to working-men's associations upon the socialistic aspects of hygiene; author of a popular quasi-medical study (in the form of a cheap pamphlet seized promptly by the police) entitled "The Corroding Vices of the Middle Classes" and a "special delegate of the more or less mysterious Red Committee"[3]. He embodies the revolutionary who abuses science by invoking its name in order to corroborate his shaky arguments. An ex-medical student, he purports to have a scientific interpretation and approach to life. Yet without realising it he undermines his own position by arguing that "There is no law and no certainty"[4], and then by asserting the primacy of the emotions in arousing action. He conceives himself to be a scientific critic of society primarily because the terms and the testing standards he utilises are borrowed from Cesare Lombroso, who is "his favourite saint"; any disapprobation of Lombroso's theory of the degenerate state of criminal types constitutes "blasphemy" for him[5]. Ironically, Ossipon overlooks the fact that his own physical features - his flattened nose and high cheek bones - are of the Negroid type, thus adequately meeting Lombroso's definition of a criminal type.

1. ibid., p. 48.
2. ibid., p. 43. The goatee was a direct reference to Satan.
3. ibid., p. 46.
4. ibid., p. 49.
5. See previous chapter for a discussion of Lombroso's theories, pp. 240-44.

Ossipon is seen throughout to excel in his egoism. The news of the explosion of an anarchist bomb shocks him merely because he fears for his modest subsidy allotted for the publication of pamphlets which might now cease. His selfishness reveals that he, too, is impotent. Towards the end of the book, when finally trusted by one towards whom he has directed his propaganda, he fails to answer the call. Winnie Verloc, desperate after killing her husband for sending her brother to his death, is seeking help and sympathy. She interprets Ossipon's wooing and concern for her financial situation as being entirely honest, and regards him as a "radiant messenger of life". He, however, turns out, instead, to be an agent of death, a false messiah. His self-centredness, cowardice, detachment and avarice cause her death; the death of the only person who is ready to follow him. He is left with her money, the testimony of his guilt: paradoxically, the very same money which has been Verloc's reward for the spying and reporting of anarchist activities to the Russian secret police.

Michaelis is yet another anarchist archetype who surfaces in the book. He is handled more gently by Conrad, as he represents the saintly type, unjustly suffering for his political views yet feeling neither grudge nor hate. He has spent twenty years in prison after an attempt to rescue some prisoners from a police van during which one of the police constables was shot. Released from prison on licence, he is now protected by a high class lady who "amused her age by attracting within her ken... everything that rose above the dead level of mankind, lawfully or unlawfully"[1].

Michaelis typifies the idealist anarchist, the dreamer and the optimist, animated by a humanitarian wish to improve the state of society by passive resistance. The dialectic-materialistic interpretation of history forms the basis of his optimism: "he saw... the end of all private property coming along logically, unavoidably, by the mere development of its inherent viciousness"[2]. Disavowing visions "of

1. ibid., p. 91. This is a theme Conrad repeats in "The Informer", a story which appeared in A Set of Six.
2. ibid., p. 44.

blood-red flags waving, or metaphorical lurid suns of vengeance rising above the horizon of a doomed society", he discards Yundt's and Ossipon's expectation of change through the wrath and enmity of the masses. He rather confides in the power of reason and education to prepare the working classes for the mastery over the world, and argues that revolutionary propaganda is "a delicate work of high conscience" and therefore "should be as careful as the education given to kings"[1].

Conrad does not question Michaelis's moral integrity, or revolutionary sincerity. However, by calling him "the hermit of visions", whose ideas developed in "a mental solitude more barren than a waterless desert"[2], he invalidates his rationalism, the source of his beliefs and convictions. He is described as a child whose ideas "were inaccessible to reasoning", his look is "a little crazy in its fixity", and his appearance "grotesque". Simple-minded and confused, he cannot provide any rational set of arguments and has no idea "what the world was coming to". His lady patron is indeed convinced by his "unembittered faith and optimism" rather than by his principles.

The three project an image of an inefficient and ineffectual organisation whose members indulge in barren and futile activities. As was true of the 'public' group in The Princess Casamassima, the anarchists' intellectual ability is limited to clichés and idle speeches about the necessity to dispense with the present social structure. Similarly, apart from the daily gibberish about such a need, they do nothing. Actual revolt is out of the question. Revolutionary satisfaction is achieved by giving vent to their rage and hatred. The Professor, another anarchist, sneers at them: "the trouble is not only that you are as unable to think independently as any respectable grocer or journalist of them all, but that you have no character whatever"[3]. Their shallowness and lack of real understanding of themselves and their aims, blind them to the blatant reality that they are propelled by self-interest and

1. ibid., p. 49.
2. ibid., p. 45.
3. ibid., p. 64.

"personal impulses disguised into creeds", and that they neither do nor ever will try to enact their propositions. Verloc, the secret agent, who knows the movement inside out, recognises that as far as "bomb throwing" is concerned, the anarchists are "hopelessly futile". This awareness forces him to induce the half-wit Stevie, his brother-in-law, to do the job of exploding a provocative bomb.

The Professor appears at first sight to be different. He stands for what Conrad terms "the perfect anarchist", the individualist anarchist defying any limiting factor, even death[1]. A walking bomb with his hand on a device prepared for detonation, he controls his own destiny as well as that of the people physically around him. The mechanism held in his pocket shields him against any harassment, especially by the police, as people believe in his fanaticism, in his determination to use the bomb. He is also his own master by existing alone, on the fringe of revolutionary circles. His isolation guarantees fewer ties and attachments. Moreover, his total nihilism, his will to destroy without determining or caring what will follow, frees him from the test of demonstration and precision, and from the dictates of reason and language. His amorality relieves him of any ethical obligation.

The Professor seeks to be a molecule, a self-sufficient entity with its own eccentric wisdom and mode of existence. Signifying nothing positive but extinction, the bomb symbolises the essence and purpose of his being: it is the source of his strength and focus of his monomaniac occupation. His days are consumed solely with the production of a perfect detonator, a perfect weapon of destruction, and during this time his main contact with and only impact on the world is through the bomb, as he supplies ready-made bombs to whoever wants them. In a conversation with Ossipon, he affirms his integrity and independence in direct opposition to the other revolutionaries who are bound by

1. The Professor reappears as a character in Conrad's story "The Informer" where he refers to him as "the true spirit of an extreme revolutionist. Explosives were his faith, his hope, his weapon, and his shield". (Conrad, A Set of Six, p. 88.)

all sorts of conventions, political and economic thoughts and dependence on being alive.

He is apparently free and all powerful, almost a superman; yet only in his own eyes. Just as with the other anarchist characters, once Conrad establishes the Professor's beliefs and state of mind, he proceeds to undo his integrity and self-image. He shows the Professor's attempt to control his own destiny firstly as mad, and secondly as self-deceptive. Gradually the Professor is revealed as a servant of his fears and a slave to his vain dreams. He does not realise that his preoccupation with the bomb only serves a psychological need, is a means of escape from his innermost obsessive fears of his fellow creatures. It is an outlet which is shaken every time he encounters or even thinks of the same human beings of whom he claims to be absolutely free. His loneliness is not a consequence of wilful decision, but comes from a necessity to assert himself where no comparison is possible. He is at the mercy of his neuroses and phobias, his humble origins and mean appearance which "stand in the way of his considerable natural abilities"[1]. Feeling weak both inwardly and outwardly, he fashions in his mind a self image of absolute superiority, which is validated by the possession and immediate accessibility of the bomb. Because humanity is a threat to his self-conception, he declares an all out war on it, and in his own imagination, backed up by Darwin's theory of the 'survival of the fittest', he triumphs. To live his fantasy and prove his "superiority over all the multitude of mankind" he dreams of a world where the weak - the "source of all evil on this earth" - will be exterminated. "Exterminate, exterminate! That is the only way of progress", he tells Ossipon, until "I remain - if I am strong enough... and yet I am the force"[2].

The notion that the rest of humanity is weak and does not know its own mind, sustains the Professor's self-estimation. The determination to destroy everything supplies the raison d'être of his survival. But he needs to

1. ibid., p. 73.
2. ibid., p. 243.

rationalize and justify his destructive drive, so he finds "a final cause that absolved him from the sin of turning to destruction as the agent of his ambition. To destroy public faith in legality was the imperfect formula of his pedantic fanaticism... He was a moral agent - that was settled in his mind"[1]. Contrary to the other comrades, he thinks England a very dangerous enemy because of its "idealistic conception of legality... and scrupulous prejudices", with which it preserves its present structure[2]. "To break up the superstition and worship of legality should be our aim" he argued. "Nothing would please me more than to see Inspector Heat and his likes take to shooting us down in broad daylight with the approval of the public. Half our battle would be won then; the disintegration of the old morality would have set in in its very temple". However, the closest he has got to taking practical measures is helping other people in sterile demonstrations of violence, without achieving any progress in the desired direction. He is the last person to be seen in the story, "frail, insignificant, shabby, miserable - and terrible in the simplicity of his idea... Nobody looked at him. He passed on unsuspected and deadly, like a pest in the street full of men"[3].

Verloc, the secret agent, represents another frequent visitor in anarchist circles, a natural if not a necessary phenomenon. An agent provocateur, he leads a life centred in a moral vacuum, in self-deception and hypocrisy. Actuated by narrow self-interests, he is thoroughly insensitive to people whose lives he affects. All this renders him incapable of establishing a true and sincere kind of relationship, and blinds him, the arch-deceiver, to the reality around him. Presumably working for the Russian secret police and used by the British police as well, he appears to the unsuspecting anarchists to be a genuine and loyal comrade, though not central or brilliant. His job is to report anarchist activities, predict their moves, engineer

1. ibid., p. 73.
2. ibid., p. 67.
3. ibid., p. 248.

their detention, and most of all create situations which enhance the general impression that the anarchists constitute a real danger to England. Furthermore, he not only distorts reality but also colours it with the turmoil occasioned by the bomb explosion he initiates; and this when he imagines himself to be the protector of societv and its wealth. In fact, he possesses no ideals or principles, and the kind of job he has chosen is simply determined by his laziness. But Verloc is as unaware of this fact as he is in the dark about what is for him the most important aspect of reality: his wife's feelings for him. It does not even occur to him that Winnie's marriage to him is a self-sacrifice on her part, a bargain which she undertook in return for security for her half-witted brother and invalid mother. Therefore, he does not suspect that the death of her brother will eliminate the only cause of her attachment to him. He pays dearly for his insensitivity.

It is clear that to Conrad's mind anarchism offered neither a cultural nor a political alternative; if anything, it seemed to him a spent force, its intellectual stimulus is non-existent and threat insubstantial. The fact that they posed no threat whatsoever to British society, though reassuring in itself, only left them even more pigmy-like. Some individuals still embraced anarchism, but their impact was nil, their number small, and above all they were not earnest in their intentions.

Though Conrad repudiated anarchism in The Secret Agent he did not necessarily approve of the society they aimed to destroy. In this book, unlike most of the sensational narratives, the anarchists are not the only negative characters. Conrad conceives anarchism as a mirror and a symptom; an integral part and a consequence of the present order of things. The subject of anarchism is thus a device for commenting on society and the social atmosphere around him. London epitomises what is distasteful to Conrad. For him the metropolis is pervaded by a spirit of anarchy. This spirit does not pertain uniquely to the anarchist movement, but is characteristic of society as a whole. He does indeed see the social system as anarchical, but not because it

lacks order or regulation, rather because it is infested with improbity and baseness. Thus 'anarchy' is here qualified in moral rather than in political terms. The anarchists are not the cause of this state of anarchy, nor are they able to suggest proper ways to correct the social defects, themselves devoid of any catalytic value - actual or theoretical. They simply reflect the moral state of society, and therefore the most cardinal symptom of the current malaise - the tendency to believe in appearances and confuse essence and accident. The anarchists, like the rest of society, are unable to understand and see themselves, their motivating power and their relationship with their surroundings, in the correct and realistic light. Not only are they on the whole apathetic and obtuse, and impervious to rational judgements of social and moral issues, but to human considerations as well. Conrad saw indifference and mediocrity, mental and emotional superficiality as the causes of contemporary societal disintegration. The anarchists portrayed in his book personify the result of this disintegration.

Thus, although it was not his aim, Conrad here touched upon the quintessential problem of British anarchism through this theme. He seemed to be saying that the anarchists were victimised and constantly closely watched largely because of the superficial and insubstantial image society and the police had of them. For him the fact that the anarchists themselves had created a threatening self-image to which they adhered, unmindful of their true identity and inner drives, only further convinced the unthinking public that what it saw and believed was a true representation of the state of things. But Conrad in no way thought that the reality was more appealing than their image; nor did he anywhere intimate that a closer examination of them would increase their popularity. To all appearances, he was not at all interested in the anarchists as victims, but as people who were pathetically infected. He did not trouble his mind here with the misfortunes of the movement, nor with why it was judged harshly, but was rather troubled by what this judgement implied about society at large. For-

tuitously, however, he provided an explanation for the gap that existed between anarchist reality and appearance.

While criticising the moral state of British society, Conrad at the same time endorsed some of its dominant values. Although he mistrusted the analytical capacity and integrity of British public opinion, he nonetheless admitted its tolerance and liberal convictions, and the fact that it was potent enough to be a determining factor in policy-making in England, as Mr. Vladimir, the First Secretary of the Russian Fmbassy in The Secret Agent, is well aware. Indeed, it is to change the liberal British policy towards anarchism that the latter devises the outrage in Greenwich. He hopes to gain the agreement of the British government to international action for the suppression of political crime through the exertion of public pressure. "This country is absurd with its sentimental regard for individual liberty" he complains[1]. Another Russian official expresses similar discontent at "the general leniency of the judicial procedure here, and the utter absence of all repressive measures"[2].

Thus the anarchists and the Russian officials remain the really negative characters of the tale. And of the two, although more dangerous, the Russians at least appear to be socially charming and welcome in famous salons in London. The gallery of anarchist types, though short of the satanical archetype, has no agreeable characteristics whatsoever. Though Conrad stripped most of the anarchists of their criminal elements, he kept their insane and immoral aspects. Here their pathetic and wretched make up, and not so much their wickedness, casts doubt on their moral substance and social integrity. Conrad totally deflated their stature by reducing them to a contemptible and degenerate form of existence, and depicting even their physical appearance as graceless. Rather than hate or fear, these characters generate pity and scorn, and hence could be expected equally to strengthen the public aversion and disapproval of them.

1. ibid., p. 33.
2. ibid., p. 24.

The question to be asked of Conrad's book is whether anarchism merely serves as social criticism or whether the book is also concerned with anarchism as such. This is a relevant question to ask since Conrad professed to be uninterested in anarchism as a phenomenonon or as a political creed, and to be concerned only with the state of anarchy and with the types operating in such a state[1]. So strongly did he feel about this point that he repeatedly dissociated himself from any link with anarchists or interest in anarchism. In a letter to Marguerite Poradowska he confidently asserted that "anarchy and anarchists are outside my experience; I know almost nothing of the philosophy and nothing at all of the men. I created this [The Secret Agent] out of whole cloth"[2]. He claimed to be no more than flattered by revolutionary refugees in New York who had purported that "the book was written by somebody who knew a lot about them"[3]. Conrad also refused to reveal the identity of his source as to the details of the bomb incident, but felt impelled nonetheless to assert that the source had no connection with anarchism[4]. Furthermore, years later, in a response to a letter and a pamphlet about the Greenwhich explosion sent to him by the anarchist Ambrose Barker, he stated: "I never knew anything of what was called... the 'Greenwich Bomb Outrage'. I was out of England when it happened, and thus I never read what was printed in the newspapers at the time. All I was aware of was the mere fact - my novel being in intention, the history of Winnie Verloc"[5].

Despite such recurrent statements, it seems credible that he did have a profound interest in anarchism, extensive inner knowledge, and firm views on it, at least when he was writing the book. One can only conjecture as to the reasons - puzzling as they are - for his total denial of such

1. In a letter to Ambrose Barker he claimed that he had no intention of attacking any doctrine or the people who believed in it, and that his object had been no more than "to hold up the worthlessness of certain individuals, and the baseness of some others". Letter dated 1 Sept. 1923 in G. Jean-Aubry, ed., Joseph Conrad. Life and Letters (London, 1927), vol. 2, p. 332.
2. Letter dated 20 June 1912 in John A. Gee and Paul J. Sturm, eds., Letters of Joseph Conrad to Marguerite Poradowska (New Haven, 1940), p. 116.
3. Conrad, The Secret Agent, p. 11.
4. ibid., pp. 8-9.
5. Aubry, p. 322.

suggestions. His interest is evidenced by The Secret Agent itself, and by the two stories about anarchism he wrote at the time: "The Informer" and "The Anarchist", both of which first appeared in the collection A Set of Six in 1908[1].

The Secret Agent evinces acquaintance with the details of the Greenwich explosion, its sequel and the speculations around it; and not only as they appeared in the general press, but also as circulated inside anarchist quarters alone[2]. Actually, Conrad was in England at the time of the event and therefore could hardly have escaped the extensive press coverage of the subject. In addition, Conrad could not but have learned a great deal about the inner world of anarchism from Ford Madox Ford who helped him to write The Secret Agent[3] (as well as other books), and was probably the source Conrad mentioned. Ford, the cousin of Olivia and Helen Rosssetti, grew up in an intellectual surroundings where he met British radicals, Russian refugees and the less prominent anarchists who came to the lectures in William Morris's house. His experience alienated him from anarchism. In his memoirs he wrote about the movement in a disparaging way and about his association with it as childhood capriciousness[4]. The anarchists were depicted as infantile and cranks, never mature enough to be responsible and serious[5].

True, Conrad himself asserted that he had chosen to write about anarchism only because of its "melodramatic" element[6], and "sensational" value[7]; because the subject was

1. Lack of space has dictated the omission of an analysis of these stories, illuminating though they are. Another book by Conrad, Under Western Eyes (1909), explores the subject of militant revolutionism, though not of the anarchist variety.
2. In particular, the plot follows David Nicoll's allegations quite faithfully. For details see Nicoll's letters to Nettlau, 13/28 Nov. 1893 and during June 1897. [N.C.] and his pamphlet The Greenwich Mystery (London, 1897).
3. Ford Madox Ford, Return To Yesterday, p. 194.
4. Ford Madox Ford, Ancient Lights (London, 1911), p. 121.
5. An exceptional case in Ford's impressions of anarchism was Kropotkin who was described in very favourable terms, but being an exception, Kropotkin was not fated to be depicted among the anarchist archetypes in The Secret Agent.
6. Gee, p. 116.
7. Letter to Algernon Methuen, 7 Nov. 1906 in Aubry, p. 38.

popular and widely discussed[1], but his literary output implies a personal interest and a distinct attitude to anarchism. Conrad's negative opinion on revolutionaries in general and on anarchism in particular, did not find expression solely in the collective image emanating from the sum total of anarchist types in the books, but was also voiced directly. In a letter to John Galsworthy he doubted whether it was worth while "attacking Anarchism as a form of humanitarian enthusiasm or intellectual despair or social atheism"[2], and in a letter to Cunninghame Graham he seemed to imply that the anarchists were not at all revolutionaries[3]. The Author's Note to the book itself also disclosed what he had felt: that the "doctrine, action and mentality" all boiled down to "criminal futility", "exploiting the poignant miseries, and passionate credulities of mankind"[4]. Indeed, this is the picture of anarchism that emerges from The Secret Agent.

While James and Conrad examined the anarchists in their natural working class surroundings, Chesterton, as a man of hyperbole and paradox, selected the unconventional setting of a fantastic nightmare for them. This did not, however, lessen the seriousness of his writing. On the contrary, the nightmare he sketched exposed all the deep-seated fears that anarchism generated. Chesterton, who shared Conrad's double-edged evaluation of the anarchists' basic unwillingness even to effect their programme, and the public's utter ignorance of this impotence, at the same time focused his tale on the hollowness of the terrifying image. No doubt he was absorbed with wider philosophical issues when writing The Man Who Was Thursday than with the unfair image of anarchism. However, it is reasonable to assume that at the same time he found the image of anarchism a striking example of a standpoint based on prejudice and preconception and devoid of an empirical justification, the exposition of which could echo his philosophical position.

1. Letter to B. Pinker, 18 May 1907, ibid. p. 49.
2. Letter dated 12 Sept. 1906, ibid., p. 37.
3. Letter dated 7 Oct. 1907, ibid.,p. 60
4. Conrad, The Secret Agent, p. 8.

In fact, The Man Who Was Thursday (1908) seems perfectly designed to throw into strong relief the gap between anarchist appearance and reality. Its first half sketches the popular conception of anarchism, and the second half undermines its foundation by demonstrating how unrealistic and muddled it was. Chesterton constructs the plot in a way that enables him to present the terror the image aroused on the one hand, and its falsity on the other. The narrative concerns the disreputable anarchist conspiracy to which Syme, a police detective, is introduced thanks to the injured pride of Gregory, an anarchist poet, who has set himself the task of proving to Syme that anarchists had to be taken seriously. One after the other, the conspirators are exposed as police spies who belong to a special division of intellectual policemen, whose sole obsession is to combat and defeat what they consider to be the true viper's nest of anarchism. Sunday, the leader of the conspiracy, turns out to be the person who has recruited all of them to this unique police squad. He is the mastermind behind both the European anarchist conspiracy and the highly qualified police force whose raison d'être is the annihilation of the very same conspiracy. Thus Chesterton construes the battle between anarchism and law and order as a fantasy - a superb creation of the human mind and imagination. The anarchist peril is in fact non-existent, but its appearance is perpetuated by political institutions motivated primarily by inner fears divorced from any grounding in reality. This phantasmagoria of anarchist conspiracy entertained in the story by both the public and the police is to a great extent reminiscent of the characterisation emanating from the various means of communication and popular literature of the time, except that by ridiculing this 'nightmare', Chesterton caricatures its propounders as well.

The focus of the story is on the group, the supposedly organised facet of anarchism. This presumed backbone of anarchism is a European body arrayed in an hierarchical manner, at the head of which rules the central European Council, consisting of seven agents, each called after a

day of the week. The most striking feature of this organisation is the formal style in which it administers its affairs. Method and order and their concomitant manifestations, like timetabled meetings, regulated proceedings, and the use of insignia, prevail. What makes it a markedly anarchist organism is its criminal design to destroy the world, and its barbarous surroundings. The members engage in contriving dynamite coups, meaning to kill as many people as possible. Their intentions are obvious from their headquarters - physically underground and crowded with arms and bombs; "the very room itself", in which they assemble, "seemed like the inside of a bomb"[1].

Syme, the policeman, pretends to be fit to replace Thursday, who died "through his faith in hygienic mixture of chalk and water as a substitute for milk"[2]. While attempting to infiltrate the conspiracy, he delivers a strident harangue which is supposed to echo anarchist sentiments and credo: "But I say that we are the enemies of society, and so much the worse for society. We are the enemies of society, for society is the enemy of humanity, its oldest and its most pitiless enemy (hear, hear)... We are not murderers, we are executioners (cheers)"[3]. Gregory, the natural candidate, is aware of Syme's true identity and therefore tries to present a favourable image of the movement to him. Syme, however, accurately sensing the 'anarchist psyche' and taking advantage of Gregory's inability to denounce him as a police spy, outdoes the real anarchist as he continues:

> "To the priest who says these men are the enemies of religion, to the judge who says these men are the enemies of law, to the fat parliamentarian who says these men are the enemies of order and public decency, to all these I will reply 'you are false kings, but you are true prophets. I am come to destroy you and to fulfil your prophecies'"[4].

Naturally, Syme, the more acclaimed speaker of the two, is elected to the Supreme European Council of Anarchy.

1. G.K. Chesterton, The Man Who Was Thursday (London, 1975), p. 23.
2. ibid., p. 31.
3. ibid., p. 35.
4. ibid., p. 37.

The members of the Council, whom he later encounters as policemen, display a fallen nature, each having at least one quality pertaining to the anarchist stereotype. Dissembling, they project a pleasant personality, yet behind each of them lurks "a demoniac detail somewhere... Each man had something about him, perceived perhaps at the tenth or twentieth glance, which was not normal, and which seemed hardly human"[1]. The crooked smile of Monday reflects the "last nightmare touch", and the effect of Tuesday - "a man more obviously mad" - has "every diablerie that can come from the utterly grotesque". Wednesday, a certain Marquis de St. Eustache, the dominant colour of whose beard, frock-coat and shades is black, "might be a Jew;... might be something deeper yet in the dark heart of the East"[2]. "The whole hideous effect" of Friday is "as if some drunken dandies had put their clothes upon a corpse"; there is "something indefinably connected with the horror of the whole scene" about him which does not "express decrepitude merely, but corruption"[3]. Saturday, a medical practitioner, wears "a pair of dark, almost opaque spectacles" which remind Syme of "half-remembered ugly tales, of some story about pennies being put on the eyes of the dead". Syme suspects that "he might be the wickedest of all those wicked men"[4]. And the most awesome of them all, their president Sunday, is a "monstrous man" with a "huge brain" and an enormous body, "like a statue carved deliberately as a colossal"[5]. The sense of his size "was so staggering, that when Syme saw him all the other figures seemed quite suddenly to dwindle and become dwarfish". He is feared, obeyed and worshipped by all the anarchists beyond criticism. They accede to his wishes because of his superiority. He is unrivalled and incomparable, almost like God himself or perhaps Satan, omniscient and omnipresent.

In order to demonstrate the degree of existing paranoia, Chesterton dramatises the special police force as a monomaniac group exclusively bent on the detection and

1. ibid., p. 58
2. ibid., p. 59.
3. ibid., p. 60.
4. ibid., p. 61.
5. ibid., p. 55.

destruction of anarchism, formed by the police on the assumption that its own image is a watered down version of the "real thing", and that the anarchist danger is greater than they imagined[1]. The group is composed of volunteer-philosophers, self-appointed "martyrs" who think of themselves as an organised resistance against the forces of evil which is involved in a Zarastrian war, in "the battle of Armageddon". Endowed with the missionary spirit of the "heresy hunters", their only justification for such a task is their complete devotion to the cause.

"We deny the snobbish English assumption that the uneducated are the dangerous criminals", the recruiting policeman explains to Syme[2].

> "We say that the dangerous criminal is the educated criminal... the entirely lawless modern philosopher. Compared to him, burglars and bigamists are essentially moral men... They accept the essential idea of man; they merely seek it wrongly. Thieves respect property. They merely wish the property to become their property that they may more perfectly respect it. But philosophers dislike property as property; they wish to destroy the very idea of personal possession... philosophers despise marriage as marriage... philosophers hate life itself, their own as much as other people's".

To this policeman's mind, the real anarchist movement is not that which perpetrated dynamite outbreaks from Russia or Ireland, but "a vast philosophic movement, consisting of an outer and an inner ring"[3]. Somewhat reminiscent of James's delineation, the outer ring, the laity, incorporates the mass of supporters who innocently believe that "rules and formulas have destroyed human happiness" and therefore "talk about 'a happy time coming'". The inner ring, the priesthood, also "speak to applauding crowds of the happiness of the future, and of mankind freed at last", but in their mouths "these happy phrases have a horrible meaning". They are too intellectual to believe in the possibility of living in real freedom. "When they talk of a paradise without

1. The allusion to the Special Branch of Scotland Yard is almost explicit. Its actual attitude to anarchism will be discussed in the next chapter.
2. ibid., p. 45.
3. ibid., p. 47.

right or wrong, they mean the grave. They have but two objects, to destroy first humanity and then themselves".

Syme, whose mental process closely mirrors that of the other members of the police team, is very anxious to join, feeling himself "mounting to attack the solid thrones of horrible and heathen kings"[1]. He developed this attitude towards anarchism by himself: the product of a cranky and tension-ridden upbringing, torn between an extremely puritanical mother and a thoroughly pagan-minded father, he reacts to anarchism with "fierce sanity". In addition, "his hatred of modern lawlessness had been crowned... by an accident"[2]: he was affected by an anarchist dynamite outrage, which almost blinded and deafened him. From then on "there was a spot on his mind that was not sane. He did not regard anarchists, as most of us do, as a handful of morbid men, combining ignorance with intellectualism... He regarded them as a huge and pitiless peril, like a Chinese invasion"[3]. Consequently, he became obsessed with this idea, always "brooding on the advance of anarchy", and then he met with the chance of his life to fulfil what he had felt to be his mission.

It is illuminating that Chesterton chose to comment here that "there was no anarchist with a bomb in his pocket as savage or so solitary as he", possibly implying that the danger lay more in this fanatic anti-anarchist attitude of mind than in anarchism itself, and that Syme's standpoint, which lacked any empirical evidence, was more harmful both for society and for the individual. The fanatical attitude revealed a suspicious and intolerant disposition which Chesterton presumably believed to be conducive to persecution and repression on the one hand, and to a lonely existence, on the other. What Chesterton seems to be saying is that the confusion between "a dream" and "objective reality" here caused by the fanatical obsession with anarchism, generates a dangerous policy which is to a large extent res-

1. ibid., p. 51.
2. ibid., p. 41.
3. ibid., p. 42.

ponsible for the existence of the dangerous anarchist type. What happens is that a 'nightmare' becomes a reality by the sheer force of its strength as a fixed idea.

Gregory, the real anarchist, says that "Those who talk about anarchism and its dangers go everywhere and anywhere to get their information, except to us, except to the fountain head. They learn about anarchists from six penny novels;... from tradesmen's newspapers... from Ally Sloper's Half-Holiday and the Sporting Times... We have no chance of denying the mountainous slanders which are heaped upon our heads from one end of Europe to another"[1]. Indeed, Syme and his colleagues first conjure up a mental image of an anarchist which they then go on to detect in people whom they already suspect to be real anarchists. At first, it looks as though their anticipations of how anarchists should look and act materialize, not because they reflect what the anarchists are, but because they are so entrenched in people's minds that they obscure the obvious reality. Ironically, the people who fully qualify for the anarchist stereotype are eventually revealed to be the anarchists' arch enemies: the police agents. Furthermore, it is they who predetermine that the uninhibited existence of anarchism will inevitably lead to a catastrophic end; and after this prejudice becomes axiomatic, they themselves invent a reality to fit it.

Thus the police at once create their tool and enemy, paradoxically the very force which will jeopardize the smooth functioning of society. Syme understands himself to be the representative of the forces of law and order combatting the pervading forces of anarchy. However, this self-conception misleads him and his friends, as it deceives Verloc. In actual fact, they are themselves the embodiment of the disruptive forces of society by each impersonating an anarchist conspirator. As soon as the reader is aware of this fact, the role of an anarchist is no longer distinct from that of the policeman, as the special squad imagine the case to be. Afterwards, Ches-

1. ibid., p. 33.

terton playfully makes the protagonists fight and then run away from their own shadows, almost to the end of the book.

The chase after imaginary anarchists and then the escape from them becomes a psychological process of revelation, a progression away from misconceptions and self-deception, towards truth and self-awareness. The whole book, in fact, outlines a course of a dissolution of illusions illustrated through the mental development of Syme. Almost throughout the book, Chesterton is undermining Syme's evaluation of the threat of anarchism and the manner in which he arrives at his conclusions. For him Syme "was one of those men who are open to all the more nameless psychological influences in a degree a little dangerous to mental health. Utterly devoid of fear in physical dangers, he was a great deal too sensitive to the smell of spiritual evil"[1].

It is difficult for Syme to get rid of the conspiracy myth. Even after he learns that most of the members of the Council are disguised policemen, his inverted logic - believing appearance to constitute reality - still operates. Now, with the rest of the pseudo-conspirators, he fancies the whole of society to be infected by and subservient to anarchism. What they fail to realise is that it is they who are seen as a "secret society of anarchists... a rich and powerful and fanatical church, a church of eastern pessimism, which holds it holy to destroy mankind like vermin"[2]. Not only are the policemen thus wrong about the character of the anarchist movement, but also about its strength and influence on the masses. When Syme realises this, he loses confidence in his own convictions. For the first time he does not take them for granted and instead plunges into a period of critical examination and scepticism. No more are people seen as totally black or totally white. He now recognises that both good and evil reside in the world, and that, like the rest, anarchism has good and bad sides to it; and moreover, that his own experience puts him in a position in which he can answer anarchists on a firmer ground.

1. ibid., p. 56
2. ibid., p. 122.

The development towards the return to the senses, to sanity, is suddenly interrupted by an abrupt turn in the plot, with Syme's final realisation that the whole affair has been a delusion, a 'nightmare'. This nightmare can be explained as the surfacing of society's subconscious and hidden fears and manias; or rather that only in a nightmare are policemen anarchists and anarchists policemen in disguise. Whatever the explanation, through the nightmare Chesterton ridicules the anarchist image. It is none other than Gregory, the poet, who is Chesterton's prototype of, what a flesh and blood anarchist is: a spouter of violent and fervent words, more confident about his literary power and "his capacity for suggesting fine shades and picking perfect words" than about anything else[1]. By no means a man of deeds, he nevertheless insists that the anarchists "do not only want to upset a few despotisms and police regulations", but that they "dig deeper and... blow you higher"[2]. Indeed, the most threatening aspect of anarchism is their choice of words and their tone of voice. They only pretend to be practising what they are preaching, while the truth is that the image of unscrupulous and wild rebels is what they are after.

Gregory epitomises well the paradox enshrined in the anarchists' position. In reality, Gregory is a theoretical anarchist, whose conception of what constitutes a hero and an anarchist forces him to try and fit in with the public image of anarchism. At the same time, he deliberately employs violent language under the instruction of Sunday, a disguised policeman, in the assumption that because people prefer to be blind to the obvious and cling to the unlikely, an appearance of a dangerous revolutionary will be interpreted as a mock-posture and harmless position. However, realising that Syme is dismissive about his "seriousness", he becomes willing to sacrifice even his life and the safety of the conspiracy in order to prove to Syme that the real anarchist movement deserves to be suspected of translating foul intentions into action. The situation becomes more

1. ibid., p. 32.
2. ibid., p. 23.

complicated when Gregory, aware of Syme's identity, tries to reverse his former desired effect by creating the impression that "the anarchist brotherhood was a very mild affair after all"[1]. These twists and turns show that the anarchist, no less than the policeman, deludes and confuses himself by his own image: Gregory is determined to persuade himself and those he respects that he is dangerous; and the public, the police and those he fears that he is not. Chesterton, for his part, assures the readers that there is no cause for alarm.

This comforting is, however, accompanied by undertones of dismay. Chesterton did not seek this relief. Evidently he - and, for that matter, James and Conrad in a sense - was much more appreciative of unscrupulous terrorists who practised what they preached, than of the propagandists of words. But whereas both James and Conrad rejected and opposed revolutionism, Chesterton seemed to find the uncompromising sort in particular somewhat promising.

That he reacted to anarchism in this way finds auxiliary support in his other numerous references to the subject. In Alarm and Discursions, for example, Chesterton describes himself conversing with an anarchist, anxiously anticipating an ardent defence of dynamite. Instead, the anarchist goes out of his way to establish the falsehood of the predominant image, incessantly citing and quoting books and speeches to corroborate his argument that the average anarchist is a philosopher of the Herbert Spencerian type[2].

Chesterton, who was then "half inclined to anarchy"[3] himself, was deeply disappointed by such an anarchist. Anarchism was appealing not because it was better than the

1. ibid., p. 32.
2. In The Victorian Age in Literature (London, 1913) Chesterton remarks that the importance of Herbert Spencer was not so much as "a man of letters" or as a philosopher, but as someone close to anarchism (p. 233). In the same book he refers to the ideological confrontation between anarchism and socialism as one of the "forgotten controversies" in history from which the socialists had emerged wholly victorious (ibid.). "The Anarchist one meets here and there nowadays is a sad sight; he is disappointed with the future, as well as with the past", Chesterton observed (p. 234).
3. G.K. Chesterton, Alarms and Discursions (London, 1910), p. 124.

present "social machine", but because it recommended a total break, which, to his mind then, might be followed by a better society. He therefore interrupts his anarchist interlocutor, telling him that he can only understand the anarchist dynamiter and not him; that he is not interested in academic and theoretical discussions but wants to know when this period will come to an end, how and what will follow it. Chesterton is anxious, above all, to be told how it feels to live without authority and discipline. At this point the anarchist escapes: anarchism could provide no satisfactory answers and no real solutions. This awareness brought the narrator to despair not only of anarchism but of the modern human mind as a whole.

Thus the anarchist movement seemed to him to be in a confused state both ideologically and tactically, and hence unable to offer him either intellectual gratification, or the prospects of a revolution. Yet unlike James, for whom anarchism was a symbol of a wider violent revolutionism, and Conrad, who completely ignored the ideological aspect, Chesterton was at least stimulated by the theoretical propositions and implications of anarchism.

James, Conrad and Chesterton were of that calibre that could not ignore social reality. They threw a spotlight on anarchist characters with contemporary society very much in evidence in the background. In the books of James and Conrad in particular, anarchism is not an isolated phenomenon, untouched and unaffected by what goes on around it, but a part of and a response to the civilization in which it grows. The three presented the readers with a disintegrating world that had lost its unifying principle, its meaning and purpose, in which the anarchists, like others, symbolised the general situation. But neither the anarchists' inner world nor the outside world in which they lived was examined in a substantial way. The anarchist characters are conveyed in colourful and powerful terms which give the pages the aura of a serious study of the subject. Yet as in popular literature, the aim of the anarchists is throughout portrayed as a negative one - destruction. Their proposed methods are almost always depicted as violent. Little mention is

made of an ideal society such as that envisaged by Kropotkin and Tolstoy. Moreover, although these writers did not sketch the anarchist along the lines of the prevalent stereotype, their portrayal when it emerged, was far from sympathetic. The few anarchist types who appeared in a better light, as minor characters in books by Philip Gibbs, Bernard Shaw or Ford Madox Ford, were evidently powerless to redress the balance. Thus whether the theme of anarchism was just a ploy to advance the drama or whether it was designed specifically to comment on anarchism, the anarchist as represented in popular and serious literature alike was neither a positive nor an appreciated figure.

CHAPTER SIX. SOME REPERCUSSIONS OF THE IMAGE

The image, as expressed almost uniformly in works of reference, in the press and in literature, did not remain a passive mental image, but had practical repercussions. The first section of the thesis suggested that the image accounted for much of the limited appeal of anarchism and for the growing isolation of the anarchist ranks from the wider socialist movement. This chapter will seek to demonstrate that the areas of interaction between the anarchists on the one hand, and the state organs and the public at large on the other, also carried the imprint of the image. Since the behaviour towards anarchists from these quarters further undermined the movement's activities and also dominated the entire life of the individual anarchist, its examination forms an essential part of the history of British anarchism as well as of the various responses to it. With this additional dimension, a study of the image of anarchism illuminates the behavioural component of prejudice.

The image had still wider implications. It cast its shadow not only on the anarchist movement but, assuming a life of its own, it was used as a weapon to taint other political issues. Moreover, the image triggered off debates about ways and means of curbing the movement, thereby making the anarchist issue a subject of some considerable political controversy.

Police activity had far-reaching consequences for the anarchist movement. Entrusted with the prevention of crime and the maintenance of public order, the police had at their disposal the means to curtail both the political and private life of the anarchists whose pursuits were presumed to be obstructive of these police functions.

The extent and precise nature of police involvement with anarchism during this period are not yet open to detailed scrutiny, since contemporary police records have still to be made public. And according to John Sweeney, a former Detective-Inspector in the Special Branch - by his

own account an "anarchist hunter" and "antagonist of revolutionaries"[1] - the police archives "are crammed with details" about anarchists[2]. Nevertheless, a fragmented picture does emerge from available evidence. It indicates that anarchists were invariably the objects of unceasing vigilance and periodical intervention by the police, whether in uniform or in plain clothes.

Anarchists repeatedly attested their awareness of the police presence both around them and in their midst. Periodical exposures of spies[3], testimonies at anarchists trials[4], and the police's own free admission through the press[5] or in police memoirs verified their suspicions. A Daily Mail reporter even learned from official sources that in fact "very much more has been done and is being done in the nature of prevention, precaution and suppression ... than is known outside official quarters"[6].

Because the London anarchists were suspected of criminal activity they came under the scrutiny of the Criminal Investigation Department (C.I.D.) of Scotland Yard[7]. Their political aspirations exposed them to the probings of the Special Branch, a sub-department of the C.I.D. whose specific province was political crime. It was set up in 1883 as the Irish Special Branch by Howard Vincent, Director of the C.I.D., with the explicit aim of counteracting the mounting activities of the Fenians in London. The decline of Irish terrorism in the latter part of the 1880s coincided with the appearance of domestic anarchist meetings and publications. Consequently, the word 'Irish' was dropped from the title (1888), and the Branch shifted its focus to the anarchist movement which was to remain a primary target for many years.

The Branch detectives were expected to keep an eye on anarchists as possible offenders in all their spheres of

1. John Sweeney, At Scotland Yard (London, 1904), p. 204.
2. Ibid., p. 34.
3. See for example Liberty, Feb. 1895.
4. See below p. 347.
5. Evening News, 6 Aug. 1900.
6. The Daily Mail, 11 Sept. 1901.
7. Outside London anarchists were the responsibility of the local police.

activity: discovering dynamite plots and conspiracies, guarding Ministers of the Crown and other British and foreign celebrities, or supervising the entry of foreign immigrants in order to detect undesirable elements among them. The same Daily Mail reporter quoted above revealed that the subject of anarchism "engaged the closest attention of some of the wisest and most experienced heads at Scotland Yard"[1]. Another source made known that there were women detectives who frequented "the dubious haunts" of foreign anarchists, reported new arrivals and extracted information from them[2]. In his memoirs, John Sweeney revealed that sometimes the officers were "handsomely rewarded by the government", for capturing dangerous anarchists[3].

In addition to the local forces, London, in particular, abounded in foreign police agents, mainly from Germany, Italy, France, Spain and Russia. They were uninterested in the indigenous movement, but came rather to spy on their nationals and other revolutionaries in order to undermine their activities. They were known for their extreme determination and for their ability to infiltrate the core of the various anarchist concentrations in the country. The assessment of McIntyre, the former Special Branch detective who published his experiences in Reynolds's Newspaper, was that if the agents provocateurs were removed from the Autonomie Club - where both local and foreign anarchists tended to congregate - one "would have reduced the number of habitués of the club by a third"[4].

As early as the late 1870s and early 1880s the German anarchist colony teemed with police agents who first helped to hatch violent plots to be implemented in Germany and Austria, and then, if they themselves were not the perpetrators, denounced them to the police of these countries. In some cases the authorities there allowed the dynamiters

1. Ibid. See also The Evening Standard, 3 June 1897 in connection with Caplan's trial.
2. Latouche, p. 232.
3. Sweeney, p. 263.
4. Reynolds's Newspaper, 7 April 1895. See also ch. 4. p. 246.

to carry out their schemes[1] in the belief that the commission of violent deeds would in itself constitute incontrovertible proof of the revolutionaries' intentions and hence justify the employment of repressive measures and perhaps put pressure on the British government to deny them political asylum. Given that the anarchist meeting places, especially in London, served both foreigners and natives, and that most of the anarchist groups were heterogeneous, the presence of foreign spies was bound to undermine the British movement as well.

Scotland Yard, too, dedicated much of its energy to foreign anarchists who were eventually thought considerably more dangerous than the indigenous contingents[2]. The concern caused by the presence of a substantial number of foreign anarchists in Britain[3] led to collaboration between the British police forces and those of other countries[4]. Even when not actively of much service, the British police turned a blind eye to the activities of foreign agents so long as they were not disruptive of British interests. The intensity of the more active collaboration was linked to the fluctuating relationships between the respective countries and local needs. At the same time, the assumptions that lay behind the police attitude to collaboration reflected the principles and opinions that guided the British police in their behaviour towards political activists generally and towards anarchists more specifically.

The commonest form of inter-police co-operation was in the field of exchange of information. Britain undertook to report on revolutionaries to those governments whose nationals were thought to be engaged in conspiracy in London, or who were expected to leave for the continent. She asked in return for the full records of dangerous

1. Carlson, p. 259.
2. A reflection of this response is seen in the Evening News's statement at the close of the 1890s: "In England we do not breed Anarchists of any but a very mild type, who contend themselves with making foolish speeches to which nobody pays attention". (12 Sept. 1898).
3. The Times, 16 Aug. 1897.
4. Morning Leader, 23 Feb. 1894.

anarchists heading for Britain[1].

Though there were complaints of negligence on both sides of the Channel, the few available official records on this type of communication show that the flow of information was, if not comprehensive, at least regular. Yet these records also indicate that Britain was reluctant to go beyond this form of collaboration. Although British representatives took part in international deliberations during the 1890s on ways to suppress anarchism, the Government refused to support international agreements which would alter the prevailing practice of the British police forces. In November and December 1898 a British delegation, headed by Howard Vincent, M.P., the former C.I.D. Director, attended the Anti-Anarchist Conference in Rome. Except for Britain, all the participants, who included representatives from 21 European countries, agreed to most of the legislative proposals[2]. Britain abstained, and from then on showed growing reluctance to participate in such gatherings.

On 14 March 1904, representatives of several European countries signed a secret protocol in St. Petersburg which proposed harsh international measures "to oppose the development of the anarchist movement with energetic resistance and concerted action"[3]. There was no British representation. This protocol was sent by the Russians and the Germans to the British Foreign Office for comment. In reply to a request for advice from the Foreign Office on the matter, the Commissioner of Police made clear that his force was satisfied with its present measures and with the level of co-operation with other countries, and was

1. See the answer of the Foreign Office to the Russian and German Governments. .H.O. 17 June 1904, 118, 516 (3).
2. The agreement urged governments to legislate against "incitement to an anarchical act or approval thereof", to seize and prevent "the sale and distribution of anarchical literature", and not to recognise anarchist crimes as "political offences" for extradition purposes. ("Précis of the Proceedings", sent by Howard Vincent to Herbert Gladstone, 9 July 1906, H.O. 118, 516 (15)).
3. H.O. 118, 516 (1).

unwilling to "be fettered by agreement with Continental authorities"[1]. "At the present moment" he continued, "the anarchist movement is practically quiescent in London and anything approaching unnecessary activity on the part of the Police would only serve to stimulate it, and be harmful". The official Foreign Office reply to the Russian and German Governments asserted that since most of the anarchists lived in the Metropolitan area, the police were exercising efficient control[2]. Subsequently, too, the British police adhered to this policy of freedom of action. In 1906 the Commissioner reaffirmed this position in response to the German Government's request to reconsider it.

Similarly, requests by individual countries for closer collaboration - such as that by the Spanish Queen to allow Spanish detectives to study at first hand the method of the Metropolitan Police with regard to anarchism - was tactfully declined[3]. The British police preferred to work quietly without the publicity that such concerted action could bring. This attitude was reinforced by their recurrent realisation that many foreign policemen, in their excessive zeal, acted recklessly and were thus responsible for bungled operations. In specifying their objections to the Italian Ambassador's offer of Italian policemen to control the anarchists in London, the Commissioner of Police revealed that the identity of the chief Italian agent in London was not only known to the British police but also to the anarchists, who had circulated a leaflet with details about him. He added that this agent's recruitment of informers was clumsy and ill-concealed, and echoed Scotland Yard's fear that informers would cease to come forward if such incompetence were repeated[4].

A few months later the Commissioner elaborated further. He cited the case of Rubino, an Italian who, dismissed from the service of the Italian police upon being denounced by

1. H.O. 18 May 1904, 118, 516 (2).
2. For a more detailed version of British objections to the proposals see "Memorandum as to the Protocol of 1904 respecting Anarchist Crimes", H.O. 118, 516 (15).
3. H.O. Aug. 1906, 118, 516 (36).
4. H.O. 15 May 1902, A, 55, 176 (44).

his anarchist friends, used his police connections to re-establish himself in his comrades' esteem. He acquired a revolver and ammunition and made an attempt on the life of the Belgian King[1]. There were other cases of anarchists who committed acts of violence to prove to their friends that they were not police spies, the Commissioner asserted, and recounted that the said Italian "had throughout deceived his employer, had supplied him with none but false information and had made use of his relations with him to further the cause of his comrades". The Commissioner insisted that the British police were unwilling "to reckon with men rendered desperate through their relations with the agents of other governments located in our midst". Their aim was "discretion and caution".

Scotland Yard was also forced to discount some of the information received from foreign agents. The 'Third-Section' (the Russian secret police), for example, was notorious for the way it fabricated evidence by adding the perpetration of fictional crimes to the records of revolutionaries[2]. However, for all the police awareness of the false alarms and grossly exaggerated reports, Scotland Yard nevertheless considered seriously any information about anarchists[3], and continued to "take precautions"[4].

The British police exercised no authority to prosecute or expel anarchists because of their anarchism, unlike those in many European states[5]. Nor were they free to detail or refuse entry to foreign anarchists as in America after the passing of the Act of Congress of 3 March 1903. In handling both native and foreign anarchists, therefore, the police were confined to surveillance and the circumscription of British law.

1. H.O. 16 March 1903, A,55, 176 (51).
2. Brust, I Guarded Kings, p. 86.
3. H.O. 118, 516 (39).
4. Brust, I Guarded Kings, p. 88.
5. "Italy gave its government full powers over administrative dealings with all suspected persons [suspected of anarchism], and France passed a press law limiting very considerably, not only the Anarchist press, but the press generally. Spain had already anticipated this action. Germany took all manner of trouble to frame exceptional laws". (Zenker, p. 249).

Police evidence in Nicoll's trial bore witness to the fact that The Commonweal alone absorbed the energies of a number of detectives. One stood watch on the office, a further two bought copies of the paper and others shadowed the principal personalities involved in its production. His trial also revealed that detectives in plain clothes noted down speeches, during or after meetings, to serve as incriminating evidence at subsequent trials[1] (in Nicoll's case Sweeney was one of them). Six detectives travelled to Dublin in the footsteps of the militant anarchist Dr. Fausset Macdonald to familiarise themselves with all his movements[2].

Extra vigilance was exercised on special occasions such as Queen Victoria's Jubilee in 1887 and visits by foreign rulers. The assumption being that "One could never be sure of what these fellows would be up to at any moment ... Scotland Yard had an anxious time keeping every movement of theirs under surveillance"[3]. During these periods "All known Anarchists, Nihilists, and other revolutionaries ... were kept under the closest observation", Sweeney recounted[4]. The police were thus very concerned when a dozen London anarchists gave them the slip during the King of Portugal's visit. Then "the very closest watch had to be kept all along the line of march, particularly upon one big public building, where the missing men were suspected to be lurking"[5]. In the event, as Sweeney further disclosed, "We knew the addresses of most of them and the places where they worked, when they did any honest work, and we kept watch on those places". In Sweeney's words "the eternal vigilance of Scotland Yard is the price that England pays for the practical immunity England enjoys from the bombs and daggers of the anarchist peril"[6].

Surveillance was combined with particularly harsh law

1. The Times, 7 May 1892.
2. Evening Herald (Dublin), 25 April 1894.
3. The Weekly Times and Echo, 8 Jan. 1911.
4. Sweeney, p. 71. See also p. 204.
5. Sweeney, p. 72.
6. Ibid., "Supplementary Chapter" in the 1905 edition, p. 376.

enforcement with regard to both written and spoken anarchist propaganda. Even before the emergence of native anarchism, the German Freiheit - the first regularly-published anarchist paper in Britain - had to close after three years of existence and move to Switzerland as a result of police interest. During this time, its editor, Johann Most, had been charged with libel and incitement to murder and sentenced to eighteen months in prison for an article he had written on hearing about the assassination of the Russian Tsar in 1881[1]. A year later, in April 1882, Freiheit's printers were put on trial for an article approving the killing of Lord Frederick Cavendish in Phoenix Park. Freedom maintained that the police hastened the decline of the paper in Britain "by giving out that all who took any part whatever in printing and distributing further issues of the Freiheit would be arrested"[2].

Domestic anarchist propaganda was marked from the outset by police incursion. The closure of some traditional speaking points in London, chief among them Trafalgar Square, and the breaking-up of meetings by police, influenced the activities of the newly-emerged anarchists and other socialists alike. But whereas the 1890s reveal a gradual, though by no means total, relaxation of police control over socialist propaganda, no such tendency is discernible with respect to anarchists.

Police action over the anarchist group in Walsall in early 1892[3] signalled an intensification of police monitoring of anarchism. The militant paper The Commonweal and the group of people engaged in its production bore the brunt of the offensive. Their violent rhetoric against the background of the Walsall affair, resulted in swift police response. In April, Nicoll, the editor, was arrested and charged with soliciting and incitement to murder on the strength of the publication of an article and a speech he had given in Hyde Park. In both he asked whether the Home

1. See ch. 1. pp. 17-18.
2. Freedom, May 1906.
3. See ch. 1. pp. 44-45.

Secretary, the judge and Melville, the police inspector involved in the Walsall affair, were fit to live[1]. Mowbray, the manager of the paper who had been arrested with him, was cleared after it had been established that he had nothing to do with the article and had indeed objected to its contents. Nicoll maintained that he had written the article in the heat of the moment when he heard the sentences passed on the Walsall anarchists, and utterly denied that he had ever intended to incite to murder, or that he had said what was attributed to him by Sweeney. However, Nicoll was found guilty and sentenced to eighteen months hard labour.

Following the arrest of Nicoll and Mowbray, the police raided the paper's office, seized the type which had been set up, all the manuscripts, samples of the printed matter in the office, and the list of subscribers. They also confiscated the literature found in the defendants' homes and correspondence concerning Walsall. At the time and for years afterwards Nicoll repeatedly claimed that the police had contrived to silence him by imprisonment, confiscating what they had found, not only as a deterrent to all anarchist propagandists, but also in an attempt to prevent the incriminating evidence he had collected about police complicity in Walsall from becoming public as he had threatened[2].

The reappearance of The Commonweal in May 1893 after a break of several months was followed in June by the arrest of Cantwell and Young - respectively the compositor and printer of the paper. They were detained while posting bills calling for a protest meeting on the occasion of the Royal Wedding, against the "waste of wealth upon these Royal vermin, while the workers are dying of hunger and overwork"[3]. They were charged with the commonly practised but unprosecuted offence of distributing bills without the printers' name and address. But when the case came to

1. For the article see The Commonweal, 9 April 1892.
2. See Freedom, April/June 1892 and David Nicoll, Anarchy at the Bar (London, n.d. 1895?), p. 5.
3. Freedom, Aug. 1893.

court the police decided not to pursue the prosecution and were content with a warning. In this case, too, the police searched the office of The Commonweal and examined the papers they found there.

A year later some members of the Commonweal Group took advantage of the imminent opening of Tower Bridge on 30 June 1894 to argue their stand. They assembled at Tower Hill and distributed a poster with a verse by William Morris. Cantwell held a yellow poster on which was written: "Fellow workers, you have expended life and energy and skill in building this bridge; now come the royal vermin and rascally politicians, with pomp and splendour, to claim the credit"[1]. Both Cantwell and Quinn made speeches. The crowd reacted with aggression and Cantwell was arrested for disorderly conduct. Quinn who came to the police court the next day was made to join him in custody. The police then dropped the original charge and both were put on trial for incitement to murder members of the royal family and politicians at the Bridge opening, and for printing a seditiously, malicious and immoral libel, a few copies of which were found in Cantwell's pocket. Cantwell was further charged with procuring a manuscript describing how to make dangerous explosives with intent to communicate its contents, and for printing a seditious placard. At the trial both of them denied that they ever advocated outrages, but were found guilty on all counts[2].

Throughout the first half of the '90s, anarchist meetings in London and in the provinces were banned on the grounds of obstruction or breach of the peace. The Commonweal described a meeting in Liverpool Street, London, thus: "Comrade Burnie was ordered to go away while speaking ... Mrs. Lahr's meeting was surrounded by a force of twenty policemen. She was ordered to 'get down'. Other comrades 'were also informed by an inspector that no meetings would be allowed there"[3]. From Leicester the anarchist group

1. Ibid., Aug. 1894.
2. For more details see chapter 1. p. 46. For an account of the trial see The Times, 31 July 1894.
3. The Commonweal, 11 Oct. 1890.

reported occasional visits from the police "to order us to remove ourselves to another spot"[1]. Anarchists in other localities were subjected to similar treatment. Police partiality was evident when the anarchists were deprived of liberties enjoyed by others: either on occasions when anarchists were refused permission to speak while others were not restricted or when they, in particular, were prevented from holding their meetings in specific places allowed to others. A breach of such rulings was a criminal offence. The repeated determination of the anarchists not to abide by these orders was met with a plethora of arrests and trials.

During 1893 the anarchists in Manchester were prohibited from holding meetings at their chosen site. As a result, Manchester became the scene of almost weekly clashes between police and anarchists. Refusing to move elsewhere, speakers were taken into custody or their names taken and subsequently were fined or imprisoned for obstruction. The authorities explained that this action was prompted by people who came out of places of worship and "were put to great inconvenience owing to the obstruction that the meeting caused"[2]. In one of the anarchist trials, however, the Chief Constable admitted that religious meetings were being held undisturbed at the same spot. Endeavouring to "show that there is another version of this wretched story besides that told in the police court", W.J. Sinclair, a city councillor and Justice of the Peace, took an unprecedented step and declared in one of the local papers that "there was absolutely nothing done ... to give offence to any reasonable man" and attributed the cause of the disturbances to the interference of militant churchmen and to the methods and violence employed by the police[3]. To his mind, those responsible for the interference were motivated by a "dislike" of anarchist opinions, and glorified "in the

1. Freedom, July 1892.
2. Manchester Courier, 3 Oct. 1893.
3. Ibid., 28 Oct. 1893.

disreputable name of the movement"[1].

The behaviour of the police in Manchester in 1894 demonstrated the distinction that they made between socialist and anarchist meetings. In this year the Chief Constable threatened to disperse meetings at which socialism and anarchism were mentioned. However, after a public outcry the authorities apologised for the reference to socialism. Meetings were permitted, it was stated, as long as they were for a "legitimate purpose"[2].

In reporting anarchist meetings the general press described cases in which the police were forced to defend anarchist propounders against the violence of hostile crowds. Anarchist papers maintained that the police intimidated speakers, and, openly or tacitly, encouraged the crowd's aggressive behaviour[3]. In one case, Freedom, reported Scotland Yard detectives had broken the anarchist flag and "hit away at any isolated Anarchist speaker or banner bearer"[4]. The paper further recounted: "Many comrades were badly cut and bruised and the meetings ... broken up".

The infrequently voiced criticism of police handling of anarchists throws light on the reality of anarchist existence against the background of police intervention. Reynolds's Newspaper related the harsh treatment meted out to the French anarchist Rousseau and went on to specify how the rest of the anarchist community was intimidated: the police "swooped down on a supposed rendezvous of Anarchists, and on this occasion have thought it discreet to detain, at least, one foreign resident in London"[5]. Another anarchist club was raided and "while some officers carefully selected documents from the belongings of those present, others made a careful search of the premises. Anarchist literature was confiscated ... Outside the establishment a young Frenchman was arrested" and detained until his identity was confirmed.

The anarchists themselves complained of undue severity

1. Ibid., 25 Oct. 1893.
2. Freedom, Oct. 1894.
3. The Commonweal, 5 Sept. 1890; 29 Aug. 1891.
4. Freedom, May 1894. See also The Commonweal, 4 Oct. 1893.
5. Reynolds's Newspaper, 18 March 1894. For another detailed description of a raid see Longoni, p. 151-52.

in the treatment of detainees and prisoners. During the Walsall affair the police were accused among other things of obtaining statements and confessions by threats and fraud[1], of keeping the defendants on a meagre diet of bread and water, and of denying them visits[2]. At times the police refused anarchists entry to court. In one case, when the defendant complained about this, a detective-sergeant "stepped into the box and declared that the said friends were all 'dangerous characters'"[3].

The low incidence of indigenous anarchist felonies and misdemeanours gradually led the police to relax somewhat their surveillance of native anarchists, though this did not apply to the foreign contingents. Indeed, the police were not to be found near the Freedom office at the time of the Houndsditch affair (December 1910) when police vigilance on foreign anarchists was at a peak[4]. There was, however, no comparable laxity by the police over anarchist meetings. After a decade of reduced anarchist activity the rejuvenation of anarchism in the early 20th century was accompanied by renewed police presence. Anarchist papers once more reported "an extra large number of policemen and detectives" in meetings[5], and on police rejections of requests for meeting permits[6]. Policemen were again seen tearing anarchist flags[7], and comrades were brought to trial charged with obstruction, meeting without authority and breach of the peace[8].

Their preoccupation with anarchism aroused police interest in other groups, such as the Legitimation League, whose areas of concern coincided with certain anarchist ideas[9]. Detective-Inspector Sweeney, the chief

1. Freedom, May 1892.
2. Ibid., Feb. 1892.
3. Ibid., Aug. 1894.
4. Letter from Keell to Nettlau, 2 March 1911. [N.C.] However, according to John Paton, the Sidney Street Siege which was a consequence of the Houndsditch affair, made the police in Glasgow actively interested in the anarchists there. Paton, Proletarian Pilgrimage, p. 229.
5. Freedom, June 1911.
6. Ibid., June 1908; July 1911.
7. Ibid., July 1909.
8. Ibid., March 1908; June 1910; Aug. 1912.
9. For details about the Legitimation League see ch. 1. pp. 51-53.

protagonist in the affair, himself admitted that the police became interested in the League once there "was good reason for believing that Anarchist proselytising took place over and over again" at its meetings, and moreover, that the anarchists were determined "to make the Legitimation League their decoying ground"[1]. For a while the authorities' interest also hinged on their conviction that if Bedborough, the editor of the League's organ, attracted anarchists he must also have engaged in the production of bombs. But this underlying assumption was promptly contradicted by Sweeney who had attended the League's meetings in disguise. The enduring objective remained, in Sweeney's words, the suppression of the "growing evil in the shape of a vigorous campaign of free love and Anarchism"[2]. Sweeney disclosed that the public prosecuter was only too anxious to co-operate in order "to protect the public from all the objectionable features of an open and unashamed free-love movement"[3].

Sweeney further revealed that the police were concerned not to appear to the public to be infringing the right of free speech and that the authorities were seeking an opportunity to prosecute on what would seem plausible grounds. Bedborough provided this opportunity by selling Havelock Ellis's Sexual Inversion - a book which was branded obscene. The League was soon defunct. Sweeney noted with relief that Britain was saved from "the growth of a Frankenstein monster wrecking the marriage laws of our country, and perhaps carrying off the general respect for all law"[4].

In order to keep internal security intact, the police made use of covert techniques, gathering information from policemen masquerading as sympathisers of the cause and paying informers from within the anarchist ranks[5]. In their painstaking efforts to hold anarchism in check, the

1. Sweeney, pp. 178-79.
2. Ibid., p. 186.
3. Ibid., p. 180.
4. Ibid., p. 189.
5. Ibid., pp. 204-05.

British police also resorted to the untypical practice of enlisting the services of agents provocateurs. The strong negative reaction of the public in the past to dubious practices of this kind[1], and the overall unfavourable attitude of senior officials to the procedure[2], had hitherto largely excluded such methods from the British system. However, police interpretation of the nature and prospect of anarchism prevailed over the tendency not to take such extreme measures.

A notorious agent provocateur who was known to have been involved in British anarchist activity was the Frenchman Auguste Coulon. Exactly when he started his career, either as a spy for foreign governments or for Scotland Yard, is not clear. In 1886 he was already in correspondence with the Socialist League. After spending time in Dublin and Paris he returned early in 1890 to London where he gained the confidence of both foreign and native anarchists. Managing Michel's International School he earned the trust of the provincial groups as well[3]. Coulon introduced himself as a professor of modern languages, but appeared to be unemployed. Claiming to be a "violent anarchist", he preached violence openly and with unflagging energy[4]. The French book, L'Indicateur Anarchiste, which he distributed, contained detailed instructions on the manufacturing of bombs. He had Most's inflammatory pamphlet Revolutionary Warfare translated with the intention of distributing it among anarchist groups throughout the country, while the 'International notes' he wrote for The Commonweal extolled terrorism.

In addition to written propaganda he engineered extensive discussions about the employment of violence, and in his talks and lectures across the country he dwelt on the same theme. As a member of the Autonomie Club, a

1. Basil Thomson, The Story of Scotland Yard (London, 1935), p. 96.
2. J.F. Moylan, Scotland Yard (London, 1929) p. 160. For the attitude of James Monro, who from 1884 to 1890 was Assistant Commissioner and then Commissioner of Police see Reynolds's Newspaper, 5 May 1895.
3. The Commonweal, 5 March 1893.
4. David Nicoll, The Walsall Anarchists (Sheffield, n.d.), p. 3.

participant, at anarchist conferences, a speaker at anarchist commemorations and a lecturer both in London and in the provinces, he reached wide audiences. He was thus able to intensify the extremism ruling in some anarchist circles and at the same time enhance the impression of a deep commitment to violence throughout the anarchist movement[1].

Coulon did not stop at suggestions but actually initiated the study of chemistry and explosives. He approached many anarchists - including key figures like Nicoll and Mowbray - on the matter but encountered little positive response. Only a few youngsters briefly joined him in a chemistry class.

Meanwhile his extremism and general behaviour alienated an increasing number of comrades. The Yarmouth group, which he had visited in 1890, complained about his speeches which they considered foreign[2]. Nicoll lost all patience with Coulon when he submitted a contribution to The Commonweal in which he celebrated the blowing up of a cow in Belgium as a great and revolutionary act[3]. In October 1891 he was expelled from Michel's school on the grounds of "mismanagement" and extreme liking for "authority"[4]. Members also began to be suspicious as he always appeared to have money without evidence of ever having earned it.

The height of his achievement was reached in the latter part of 1891 when he managed to trap six native and foreign anarchists - most of them living in Walsall - by inducing them "to make a wild attempt at aiding an oppressed people abroad to defend themselves against a despotic government"[5]. He first embroiled them in making castings and then in a complete bomb in accordance with a sketch he had posted to them from London. Soon he was pressing them to carry out the job immediately.

The British police had been in the picture for some

1. For the content of some of his talks see The Commonweal, April 1891.
2. Ibid., 6 Sept. 1890.
3. Nicoll, The Walsall Anarchists, p. 9.
4. The Commonweal, 5 March 1892.
5. Freedom, May 1892.

time, shadowing all the people apparently implicated[1]. William Melville, a senior official of the Special Branch and its future head, orchestrated the operation, and on the appointed day (6 January 1892) himself made the first arrest. Subsequent arrests were followed by searches of clubs in London and in Walsall, investigations, detention of members and confiscation of propaganda material. At the trial the whole anarchist movement seemed to be arraigned. It emerged as bloodthirsty and dangerous. Correspondingly, public hysteria, constantly fuelled by the press, soared - eliciting continuous speculations and anticipations of bomb explosions. The police themselves became caught up in this climate, recurrently finding evidence of conspiracies and bomb manufacturing, all of which were revealed to be groundless[2].

What substantiated the anarchists' allegations that Coulon had instigated the whole affair was the fact that he escaped unscathed from the police while other anarchists less militant than he were questioned and searched. At the magistrates' inquiry at Walsall, Inspector Melville "would not swear he had not employed him"[3] but refused to answer further questions regarding Coulon and maintained this refusal at the trial. In both he was upheld by the bench. McIntyre's revelations in Reynolds's Newspaper three years later confirmed the allegations made by the anarchists. In his words, Coulon was Melville's 'property'[4].

The Walsall affair shed light on the involvement of police spies in anarchist circles. McIntyre stated that Coulon "was by no means the only individual who was prominently connected with the Anarchist movement and at the same

1. Sweeney, p. 209. Also The Times, 5 April 1892.
2. Evening News, 2 May 1892; The Commonweal, 23 Jan. 1892; The Daily Argus, 6/8/9 Feb. 1892.
3. The Times, 10 Feb. 1892.
4. Reynolds's Newspaper, 14 April 1895. Coulon himself continued for a while to encourage acts of terrorism through his paper and various handbills. Simultaneously, he spent much energy in trying to clear his name. (See the handbills "Anarchy is too true a Doctrine" (1892) and "The Mysterious Anarchist" (April 1892). Coulon also circulated a French handbill to the same effect).

time in the service of Scotland Yard or one of the Continental police departments"[1]. In fact, according to him, some of the anarchists who used violent language or "the most fearful threats against the police" were in communication with foreign governments and Scotland Yard[2]. Melville himself admitted that he "had paid money to a good many Anarchists" to remember whether he had paid Coulon in particular[3]. Indeed, during the unfolding of the Walsall affair, it transpired that another militant anarchist, John McCormack, was, though for a short time, in the pay of the police[4]. This he himself revealed while on trial for disorderly behaviour[5]. According to Nicoll it was he who offered his services to the police as soon as the Walsall anarchists were arrested[6]. Nicoll further suggested that the police intended to use McCormack as a witness in the Walsall trial, but his reputation was such that they soon abandoned the idea.

It may be that Coulon was an isolated case of an agent provocateur used by the British police against the anarchists, who appeared at the time to be growing rapidly in number. It is even more likely that Coulon had concocted the plot - whether at his own initiative or that of foreign police authorities - and only subsequently wrote to Scotland Yard and put them in the picture. Whatever the case, by McIntyre's testimony all the information that Coulon supplied to the police during the course of the formation of the plot was submitted to Robert Anderson, the Assistant Commissioner of Police, who, he claimed, "was in possession of all its various phases" and directed "what action was to be taken in the matter"[7]. McIntyre further suggested that Anderson, "in his turn, was responsible to one man only,

1. Reynolds's Newspaper, 28 April 1895.
2. Ibid., 14 April 1895.
3. The Times, 10 Feb. 1892.
4. In Sept. 1888 he was arrested for using a language "calculated to bring the Royal Family into contempt" and for inciting the crowd "to sack shops". The Commonweal, 29 Sept. 1888. For his connections with the socialist movement see The Commonweal, 5 March 1892.
5. The Daily Argus, 9 Feb. 1892.
6. Nicoll, The Walsall Anarchists, p. 15.
7. Reynolds's Newspaper, 14 April 1895.

the Home Secretary, whom he had to inform of all matters of this character". If this was true, the Government itself must have given Coulon its blessing. However, in an answer to Cunninghame Graham's question in Parliament whether an agent provocateur had been used in Walsall, the Home Secretary replied that their employment by the police "was not only not sanctioned, it was forbidden"[1].

The role of the agent provocateur was to destroy political reputations through fostering illegal activities and violent language. From evidence examined it becomes clear that the police at least once made use of an agent provocateur in an attempt to intensify anarchism's negative image. Police involvement in the Legitimation League suggests that the anarchist threat was not perceived merely in physical terms. Maximum protection of society was conceived by the police as extending inevitably into the realms of anarchist thought. This stance explains the zeal with which the law enforcers maintained their interest in anarchism even when there was minimal show of violence, and furthermore accounts for alleged police intrusion into the private lives of anarchists in spheres totally outside routine procedure. The anarchists claimed that anonymous letters were written by the police and that they sometimes called in person on employers to tell them that their employee was a "dangerous character", or attempted to persuade printing houses to refuse their services to anarchists[2].

Correspondence between the police image of anarchism and that of the general public is suggested not only by police measures, but in the terms in which individual officers spoke of anarchists. As ordinary citizens, it was perhaps inevitable that their attitudes were influenced to a certain extent by prevailing opinion. What emerges most strikingly is their unhesitatingly negative generalisations. Pervading all others was the belief that "anarchy and ordinary crime intermingled"[3]. So intimately linked were

1. The Times, 18 Feb. 1892.
2. Freedom, March 1892 and The Commonweal, 2 July 1892.
3. Brust, I Guarded Kings, p. 98. See also Sweeney, p. 204 and the views of a leading police official in St. James's Gazette, 9 July 1894.

the concepts of anarchism, crime and terrorism that ordinary crimes which had not been provably attributed to anarchism, Irish terrorists and Russian revolutionaries were discussed in the context of anarchism in policemen's memoirs. The other characteristic frequently mentioned as related to anarchism was madness. Anarchist crimes, in Sweeney's opinion "are the outcome of a jaundiced view of things which is akin to madness"[1]. The anarchist milieu was represented as synonymous with the underworld, ruled by brute force and populated by desperate ruffians. Malatesta, whose life Harold Brust - another Branch detective - described as "a career of devilry" was portrayed as the leader of such a gang[2]. Brust asserted that no fiction writer had yet "created a character to out-rival this strange, fantastic personality of real life"[3].

The character analysis of the anarchists and the built-in tension of many references to the subject conveyed the unmistakable impression that in anarchism there was true cause for alarm. Sweeney also explicitly stated that most of the anarchists "constitute a very real and serious danger to society"[4]. Brust elevated them to the level of "an ever-present menace to the peace of Europe"[5], and Robert Anderson, Assistant Commissioner between 1888-1901, referred to them as the enemies of humanity[6]. It was precisely the anarchists' involvement in politics which made them appear particularly dangerous. "Fanatics are the unknown quantity, the nightmare of the guarding detective's nights and days, for one knows not when the impulse to strike may come upon them, nor upon which nationally-known figure the attempt may be made" Brust warned[7]. And as for the "harmless" anarchists, Anderson maintained that "Evil principles ... often do more harm than evil practices"[8].

1. Sweeney, p. 296. See also St. James's Gazette, 9 July 1894.
2. Brust, I Guarded Kings, p. 95.
3. Ibid.
4. Sweeney, p. 294.
5. Harold Brust, In Plain Clothes (London, 1937), p. 64.
6. Robert Anderson, "The Problem of the Criminal Alien", The Nineteenth Century, vol. 69 (Feb. 1911), p. 217.
7. Brust, In Plain Clothes, p. 29.
8. Anderson, "The Problem of the Criminal Alien", p. 218.

The sense of danger the detective felt or attempted to transmit to the public was intensified by stories of authentic confrontations with anarchists. The policeman facing anarchists exposed himself to grave risks, the reader was given to understand[1]. Particularly renowned was the story about the confrontation between Melville and Francois whose extradition had been demanded in connection with the Café Very explosion, and his wife "believed to be even more dangerous and reckless than himself"[2]. Also widely circulated were accounts of the terrible vengeance awaiting policemen in disguise once their identity became known to the anarchists. Even if these police officers spoke or wrote with an eye to the public or with a tendency to self-advertisement their overall attitude was unmistakable. The very choice of emotionally-laden words - that the anarchists, for instance, were if "not quite the scum of the earth ... surely ... not very far removed from it"[3], betray their partisanship.

That policemen in key positions favoured stronger methods in meeting both the physical and moral threat of anarchism throws further light on police attitudes. Sweeney proposed the passing of a law that would make the preaching of anarchism illegal[4]. The offender, he proposed, should be jailed for two years. A different view was expressed by a leading Scotland Yard official who preferred hanging[5]. Robert Anderson, who was a deeply religious person, declared: "were it not for our belief in future life we should do well to exterminate them like plague-infected vermin"[6].

Police opinion is not only instructive of the ethos that lay behind much of police action, but also because police views were indirectly channelled back into the political system. Police reports about anarchism were faithfully

1. See Evening News, 14 April 1892.
2. George Dilnot, Great Detectives and Their Methods, (London, 1927), p. 177.
3. Sweeney, p. 295.
4. Ibid., p. 223. Also p. 346. For more of his opinions see also G. "Anarchist Propaganda in England", p. 343.
5. St. James's Gazette, 9 July 1894.
6. Anderson, "The Problem of the Criminal Alien", p. 218. For more of his views about the subject see Robert Anderson, The Lighter Side of my Official Life (London, 1910), pp. 175-77.

passed to the Home Secretary. Their advice was sought by the Foreign Office and often quoted by the press. In addition, their evidence was a regular feature of anarchist trials. The combination of direct and indirect police influence thus bore heavily on the development of both anarchism and on the life of its adherents.

The prevailing anarchist image occasionally found its way into courtrooms, in prosecution arguments and witnesses' testimonies, and sometimes spilt over into judges' and magistrates' summing-ups and comments. At the conclusion of Henry Conway's trial, for example, for smashing a shop window and stealing diamond rings, the chairman, Sir Peter Edlin, called the prisoner a "dangerous thief" and addressed him "on the evils of Anarchism"[1]. The Attorney General who was the prosecuter at the Walsall and also at Nicoll's trials - in itself an indication of the seriousness with which the cases were regarded - relied upon translations of the most sensational passages in foreign anarchist literature to explain what sort of people anarchists were[2]. At the first trial he was supported by the judge who read "The Feast at the Opera" to the jury[3]. This was an article taken from L'Internationale - a French anarchist paper which was later found to be subsidised by the police - containing a plan for setting fire to an opera house and burning the rich alive. It also painted a picture of the delight with which the anarchists would regard the event. The anarchist press time and again undermined the validity of such evidence by insisting that anarchists regarded "its inhumanity with horror"[4]. The Walsall accused had themselves "repudiated the literature that had been introduced into the case ... twelve or thirteen times"[5]. Moreover, the anarchists believed the piece to be the work of the French police.

Institutionalised hostility to anarchists was matched by generally similar attitudes among the public, whose

1. The Daily Chronicle, 26 Oct. 1893. For more details see ch. 2 p. 133.
2. Nicoll appeared before the Lord Chief Justice.
3. The Times, 5 April 1892.
4. Freedom, April 1892.
5. The Commonweal, 9 April 1892.

antagonism spread into the very quarters on which the existence of propaganda efforts depended: newsagents refused to sell anarchist papers and hall proprietors had to be unusually tolerant to allow anarchist meetings[1]. Jewish anarchists suffered at the hands of the Jewish establishment which did everything in its power to curtail anarchist activities. Jewish anarchists were slandered and vilified in the Jewish press and from synagogue pulpits, and members of the community were encouraged and even intimidated into denying them any service. On one occasion both the compositor and printer of the Arbeter Fraint were bribed to disrupt the publication of the paper[2].

In their private lives, too, the anarchists were subjected to discomfort, abuse and even ostracism. Economically, like other workers, the proletarian anarchists suffered the repercussions of seasonal work and unemployment. Yet as anarchists they seem to have been even more susceptible to economic pressure from the threat of dismissal by intolerant employers. Frank Kitz was boycotted by employers all through his life[3]. Barrett was "discharged from his job with no reason given" after the Sidney Street Siege and "was never again allowed to work at his profession in Glasgow"[4]. In an attempt to circumvent this victimisation he changed his name from Ballard to Barrett. Ted Leggatt, another victim of periodical unemployment, advised members "not to discuss while at work, if you have to depend on the Employers for a job"[5].

Private citizens were impelled to translate their feelings about anarchism in other more vehement ways. The period of the Boer War when "MacQueen had been badly knocked about, almost lynched at an open-air meeting" was not unique[6]. The anarchists were liable to be assaulted both verbally and physically by hecklers and resentful crowds

1. Ibid., Oct./Nov. 1890; 5 Sept. 1891.
2. Rocker, The London Years, p. 127-28. Also p. 154.
3. See his letters to Nettlau dated 22/27 Nov. 1911; 15 March 1912. [N.C.].
4. Paton, Proletarian Pilgrimage, p. 230.
5. The Torch, Oct. 1894.
6. Rocker, The London Years, p. 158. See also Freedom, May 1894.

whenever and wherever they spoke or sold their literature. Bourdin's funeral turned into a demonstration against anarchism. The day before the funeral the windows of the Autonomie Club were smashed. The crowd that assembled there hissed and booed anarchists "on entering and leaving the club and cries were raised of 'Down with the bomb throwers'"[1]. Police attempts to control anarchist activity were themselves "based entirely on the supposition that the London crowd could be trusted to co-operate with the police in maintaining order"[2].

Apart from its contribution to the precarious existence of the anarchist movement, the image harboured yet another potential. While anarchists were the obvious victims of their own image, others, too, were exposed to its adverse affects. So widespread and entrenched was the image that private individuals and certain interest groups played upon the sentiments the image provoked and used it to fight other issues. As socialists feared[3], attempts were made to taint the socialist movement by associating it with anarchism[4]. Demonstrations by the unemployed and other expressions of labour discontent were lumped together with reports and discussions about anarchism[5]. Anarchism, anarchy and the Irish separatist cause were mentioned in the same breath[6]. Writers and artists who did not conceal their dissatisfaction with their surroundings and searched for new values and ways of expression earned the anarchist label[7]. They included the pre-Raphaelites, Thomas Hardy, Cunninghame Graham, Chesterton, Oscar Wilde and Bernard Shaw.

In the pre-war years there even existed the Duty and

1. Morning Leader, 24 Feb. 1894.
2. The Daily Mail, 11 Sept. 1901.
3. Justice, 21 July 1894.
4. The Spectator, 19 April 1890 and The Times, 21 Sept. 1901.
5. The Times, 16/20 Feb. 1894.
6. The Spectator, 25 Sept. 1886; 22 Oct. 1887; The Times, 15 Oct. 1901.
7. See "Culture and Anarchy" The Quarterly Review, vol. 174 (April 1892) pp. 317-44; "Anarchist Literature", The Quarterly Review, vol. 178 (Jan. 1894), pp. 1-30 (The author of this review was William Barry discussed in Ch. 5 pp. 287-88.) and E. Wake Cook, "Anarchism in Literature", The Contemporary Review, vol. 98 (Dec. 1910) pp. 680-92.

and Discipline Movement which coupled all the Social phenomena it condemned with anarchism, and campaigned against them in the name of opposition to the anarchist spirit. Its sentiments indicated the range of issues with which anarchism was associated, especially by the forces resisting change. The movement set out to combat indiscipline in national life - particularly at home and in schools - and support "legitimate authority". A collection of twelve papers entitled Anarchy or Order published by the movement was unified by the assumption that "anarchist modes of thinking and living are encountered every day, in all ranks and conditions of society"[1]. These were manifested in growing egoistical and undisciplined behaviour, in nonconformist literature, art and theories of education (especially of Montessori), in the attitudes of some women and in the strike wave of 1911. Such attitudes and practices, if not exposed and condemned - so it was feared - were sure to give rise to a far greater preaching of anarchist ideas[2].

But the most consistent and far-reaching manipulation of the image was practised by the anti-alien lobby. Many of those who uninhibitedly made use of the sinister anarchist image and demanded severe measures to crush the movement were restrictionists. Lord Salisbury's Bill[3] intimately linked the two issues. Colonel Howard Vincent and Sir William Evans-Gordon, who between them made many of the negative references to anarchism in Parliament, were the leaders of the anti-alien campaign. The arguments in support of alien control were infused with allusions to anarchism.

The anti-alien and anti-anarchist sentiments fed upon one another. By employing the adjectives 'murderous', 'anarchist' and 'alien' in conjunction, the conservative press created a picture of close identity between these categories[4]. It sought to prove the undesirable nature of

1. Anarchy or Order (London, 1914), p. 5.
2. For a similar conclusion see "The Road to Anarchy", The Times, 8 July 1912.
3. See below pp. 355-56.
4. See title "Anarchists, Criminals, and Aliens" in The Times, 10 Jan. 1911 (editorial).

the immigrants and thereby the wisdom of restriction, by stressing the criminal tendencies of the anarchists alongside assertions that many immigrants were anarchists. The prospective immigrant was described not only as a pauper - and thus a sure burden on the community - but also as a terrible anarchist harbouring violent deeds and ideas. In this vein, the public was warned against extending hospitality to "notorious alien malefactors and militant anarchists"[1].

In the light of widespread anti-Jewish feelings the fact that most of the immigrants were Jews explains much of the support for control legislation. This case was strengthened considerably by explicit and implicit suggestions that many Jews were anarchists. Already in 1887 the St. James's Gazette affirmed: "the vast majority of these foreign Jews are nihilists and anarchists of the very worst type"[2]. Even the report of the Royal Commission on Alien Immigration, published in 1903, in exposing the "Evils attributed to alien immigration" referred to the large component of "criminals, anarchists, prostitutes and persons of bad character" in the immigrant community, and throughout assumed their Jewishness[3].

The image had yet wider implications. Since the anarchist was automatically suspected of evil intentions and of being in the service of crime - even when he appeared docile and harmless - he provoked a widespread public debate about the way he should be handled. This debate became a political issue in the early '90s and continued to be of public concern throughout the period under review. Naturally it acquired momentum with every fresh anarchist incident, in tandem with the fast rising feeling that the anarchist threat was real and urgent.

If the image reflected an accepted standard of interpretation, the question of the appropriate reaction to

1. The Daily Mail, 29 Dec. 1910.
2. Quoted in John A. Garrard, The English and Immigration, 1880-1910 (London, 1971), p. 26.
3. T.W.E. Roche, The Key in the Lock (London, 1969), p. 65.

anarchism was a contentious area. The conflicting views were the combined outcome of different assessments of anarchist strength and attitudes to political tolerance. The views of those who were dissatisfied with existing measures were widely reported in the press - thus conveying the strength of public interest in such issues - and on the whole had the backing of conservative opinion. Some recommended the use of the "shotgun or the bludgeon"[1], and even implied lynching[2]. Others proposed to place anarchists under lock and key in asylums for their failure "to conform with the intellectual life of the social body"[3], and to divert potential recruits from involvement with anarchism through the therapy of sport[4]. A reporter of the St. James's Gazette went to the police with a suggestion for tatooing anarchists as a means of warning people against the "noxious beast"[5]. The great majority of the proposals, however, recognised that any action had to be implemented within legal constraints and monitored by the forces of the law.

Suggestions for extending the power of the police abounded in the press, varying from new reinforcements of special detectives[6], to conferring upon the police additional powers to arrest, interrogate and to secure the expulsion of foreigners[7], and to allow the police to carry arms[8]. Frequent demands could be read in the press for joint action with foreign governments[9].

Pride in the liberties enjoyed in Britain was widely shared by the public. The difference in this respect between Britain and other European states was celebrated time and again in the context of the treatment of anarchists abroad. Oppression in other countries was criticised almost across the political spectrum[10]. Authoritarian rule

1. Evening News, 12 Sept. 1898.
2. Ibid., 30 April 1892.
3. Daily Express, 17 Sept. 1901.
4. Ibid., 13 Sept. 1901.
5. St. James's Gazette, 9 July 1894.
6. The Spectator, 9 June 1906.
7. See for example The Times, 4 Jan. 1911.
8. The Daily Mail, 19 Dec. 1910.
9. The Times, 1 Feb. 1909.
10. The Spectator, 14 July 1894.

manufactured criminals, the governments of these countries were warned[1]. Even the Evening News - which usually referred to anarchists in pathological terms - accepted in this context that the "Anarchist is bred by misrule and bad government"[2]. However, the feelings current in certain conservative circles ran so high that they were eager to see the suspension of civil liberties in relation to anarchism[3]. They felt that British liberties "were carried a little too far" and that the police should not be content with surveillance: anarchist clubs should be closed[4], and anarchists detained for questioning[5]. A more extreme outlook held that the "noxious beast" was to be removed "either by perpetual incarceration or extinction, a detail to be left to the authorities"[6]. On occasion, suggestions were accompanied by emotional outbursts like "stamp them out", "crush it out of existence", and "strangle this evil"[7].

Some contemporary views aimed to muzzle the anarchists through more extensive use of the penal code and by reinforcement of existing laws[8]. There was, however, also much pressure for new and more drastic legislation. A correspondent even advocated the formation of an anti-anarchist society, which would specifically campaign for anti-anarchist legislation[9]. The burden of the demand was that "any teaching that organised government might, could, or ought to be abolished should be treated as part of the murderous conspiracy defined as crime"[10]. Legislation was particularly urged against alien anarchists. People demanded the removal of the right of asylum for anarchists[11] and after the passing of the Aliens Act (1905), pressure was heavily exerted for a sterner application of the Act to the anarchists or for a new Act similar to the one in

1. Daily Express, 8 Aug. 1900. Also The Spectator, 14 Aug. 1897.
2. Evening News, 12 Sept. 1898.
3. The Times, 16 Feb. 1894.
4. Ibid. Also The Saturday Review, 11 Aug. 1900.
5. The Spectator, 30 Sept. 1893.
6. The Saturday Review, 19 June 1906.
7. Daily Express, 9 Sept. 1901.
8. St. Stephen's Review, 17 Dec. 1887; The Spectator, 24 Feb. 1894 and The Daily Mail, 19 Dec. 1910.
9. Daily Express, 17 Sept. 1901.
10. The Saturday Review, 14 Sept. 1901.
11. Evening News, 6 April 1892.

America[1].

The question attained such importance that it was taken over by the two major parties and became a subject of controversy between them. As a result, the two Houses of Parliament served as a forum for scathing attacks on the Government's leniency towards anarchists from Conservative benches, particularly during the Liberal rule between August 1892 and June 1895 and from 1906. Members would draw the attention of the Commons and the Home Secretary to anarchist articles[2], placards[3] and speeches[4] with a view to prosecution. The Home Secretary was also attacked for allowing anarchist meetings[5]. In November 1893, Mr. Darling, whose concern with anarchism appeared to be intense, asked leave to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, "The inexpediency and danger to the public peace of permitting Anarchists and disorderly persons to hold public meetings in Trafalgar Square"[6]. He called on those members who supported the motion to rise in their place. Forty members did so. Describing Freedom Group as a conspiracy, he asked "how it was that such persons should be allowed under the protection of the police, and with the sanction of the Government, to hold public meetings in the heart of the Metropolis". He then demanded prosecution of the anarchists on the grounds of libel for hanging an effigy of Asquith, the Liberal Home Secretary, and reminded the House of the content of "The Feast at the Opera"[7]. The attitude of the Liberal Government proved to him that freedom "degenerated into licence".

Coming to his support, A.J. Balfour contended that the anarchists were dangerous despite their small number, for "their power for evil" depended "upon their own

1. The Daily Mail, 29 Dec. 1910; 5 Jan. 1911; The Times, 4 Jan. 1911.
2. H.C. 28 Nov. 1893, 1909; H.C. 30 Nov. 1893, 103; H.C. 7 Dec. 1893, 646; H.C. 20 June 1906, 650.
3. H.C. 20 July 1894, 562.
4. H.C. 21 Sept. 1893, 1780; H.C. 13 Nov. 1893, 776; H.C. 14 Nov. 1893, 874; H.C. 14 Dec. 1893, 1369.
5. H.C. 1 Dec. 1893, 262; H.C. 20 Feb. 1894, 850; H.C. 14 June 1906, 1139.
6. H.C. 14 Nov. 1893, 881.
7. For its content see above p. 347.

indifference to life" and "the brutal courage which they may be able to display in using the resources of chemical discovery of the most brutal form of destruction of innocent men, women and children"[1]. Assuming that "The Feast at the Opera" was the objective of the anarchists he wished to deny them free speech. The propagation of anarchist opinion "endangers the very foundations of the social system", he insisted.

Members fiercely criticised the extension of the right of asylum "to persons of this character"[2] and demanded that the Government "bring in a Bill to save this country from becoming the refuge of the avowed advocates of assassination"[3], and from "being made the centre of the operations of these dangerous persons"[4]. Britain was the only country to take no steps in the matter, the House was reminded[5]. After the passing of the Aliens Act and the return of a Liberal Government (1906) the latter was strongly criticised for its negligence in failing to control the entry of foreign anarchists[6].

In 1894 the Marquis of Salisbury, Tory Prime Mininster both immediately before and after the Liberal Government of the time, led the campaign in the House of Lords to limit immigration and the right of asylum to anarchists. To these ends he presented a two-part Bill, the first part dealing with the treatment of destitute aliens in general and the second specifically with anarchists. In the latter part he proposed that the Home Secretary should have the power of expelling "any foreigner whose presence in this country is either dangerous to the public peace here or is likely to promote the commission of crimes elsewhere"[7]. He felt that such a move was "part of our duty to the commonwealth of nations". "It was passed on Second Reading over the opposition of a Liberal Government now led by Lord

1. Ibid., 891.
2. H.C. 28 Feb. 1898, 139.
3. H.C. 14 Dec. 1893, 1369.
4. H.C. 22 Dec. 1893, 205.
5. H.C. 16 Aug. 1894, 1245; H.C. 19 Feb. 1894, 721.
6. H.C. 14 May 1906, 181; H.C. 11 June 1906, 701; H.C. 14 June 1906, 1138.
7. H.L. 6 July 1894, 1054.

Roseberry, but died quietly when the Liberal whip in the Commons expressed his opposition 'in very unusually forcible language'"[1].

The division of opinion in this debate about the steps the Government should take against anarchists reflected the major political orientations. Liberal opinion tended to object to the institution of harsher measures. Distrustful of a strong centralised state apparatus, Liberals objected to the extension of its authority to act and in this light opposed legislation against anarchists and aliens. Their misgivings about increased state power were paralleled by their anxiety over the fate of civil liberties. Liberal-democratic theory insisted that the chief function of the law was to secure rights and widen individual freedom. It held that more law and harsher measures might end in the erosion of freedom for the innocent too[2]. "Panic legislation would do nothing to save us from Anarchy, and might very well sacrifice certain most cherished principles of English liberty", concluded a liberal paper[3]. In its answer to foreign recommendations of repression and punishment of anarchists the Liberal Government itself also emphasised the "principles traditionally accepted here with regard to the individual freedom of all persons, whether natives or foreigners, whatever opinion they may have, so long as no substantial evidence of crime or criminal intentions can be produced against them"[4].

What the Liberals feared most of all in connection with the anarchist movement was not so much its activities, as the use that would be made of the anarchist image to justify arguments for coercion which would then weaken liberal traditions. Their reaction to anarchism highlighted the attitude of Victorian and Edwardian liberalism to the growing power of the government and challenges to democratic procedures.

Although moderate conservatives expected the police to

1. Garrard, pp. 32-33.
2. See Asquith's reply to Vincent Howard, H.C. 19 Feb. 1894, 721.
3. Westminster Gazette, 27 Feb. 1894.
4. H.O. 9 July 1906, 118, 516 (15).

differentiate between anarchist theorists and "men of action" who were ready to kill kings[1], other conservatives saw anarchist propaganda as a criminal offence in itself, which therefore should be punished. They believed that guarding society against anarchists was more important than the freedoms jeopardised.

Liberals justified their approach on grounds of utility as well[2]. In contrast to extreme conservative predispositions, the Liberals largely discounted the strength of anarchism - both physical and moral - and on this basis, weighing the advantages of anarchist containment against the introduction of coercion, concluded that the former would be too costly in terms of liberal goals. Moreover, while for certain conservatives leniency was an open invitation to aggressive action, the Liberals argued that tolerance constituted the safest guarantee against anarchist violence. They argued that the effect of repression would be counter-productive; that removing any means of expressing dissent would foster criminal practice. Set against the scarcity of anarchist crimes in Britain, the extensive terrorist campaigns in oppressive countries were for many Liberals the best proof of this conviction[3].

The argument that anarchist outpourings "act as a kind of safety-valve to feelings and opinions which are only dangerous so long as they are held in suppression and are not properly looked after" was also invoked against the demands for a hard-line policy[4]. Such demands, Asquith stressed, gave "a gratuitous advertisement to a handful of insignificant men"[5]. Years later, motivated by the same idea, Herbert Gladstone, the statesman's son and the then Home Secretary, refused to prosecute anarchist writers, as such an attempt "would serve no purpose but to advertise the mischievous article"[6].

1. The Spectator, 9 June 1906. Also 24 Feb. 1894.
2. See Gladstone's reply to Gordon-Evans, H.C. 25 June 1906, 650.
3. The Daily Chronicle, 20 Feb. 1894.
4. Asquith's reply to Darling, H.C. 14 Nov. 1893, 881.
5. Ibid.
6. H.C. 2 July 1906, 1417.

The reconciliation for Liberals between security and political rights was sought through the offices of Scotland Yard and through domestic legal processes[1]. "Not much is heard of the vigilance of Scotland Yard, but it is perhaps not the less effective on that account", The Daily Chronicle stated[2]. Asquith assured Parliament that "measures taken in this country for dealing with Anarchists" were "well-considered" and "effective"[3]. He was reluctant to ban meetings "unless it occasions serious obstruction to the traffic"[4]. The subject-matter or content of speeches remained "to be dealt with according to law", expanded Herbert Gladstone, then First Lord of the Treasury[5]. In the latter's capacity as Home Secretary more than a decade later he gave a similar answer to pressure for the suppression of anarchist publications[6].

Yet for all the variations in propensity, rhetoric and interpretation of anarchist existence between Liberals and Conservatives, in practice there was little difference between the behaviour of Conservative and Liberal Governments towards anarchism. Conservative Governments did not follow the stern line suggested by some of their leaders and chief supporters while in opposition, whereas the dramatic clampdown on a few supposed anarchists occurred under a Liberal Home Secretary - Winston Churchill: 1,500 armed policemen, joined by two squads of Scots Guards from the Tower and later by a detachment of Royal Horse Artillery, were called out to overpower the Houndsditch robbers barricading themselves in 101 Sidney Street. The besieged (with the possible exception of Peter the Painter) were left to burn to death. The key to policy changes appeared rather to lie chiefly in the vicissitudes of anarchist fortunes. In the same way, the press and Parliament showed interest in the introduction of harsher measures against anarchists whenever

1. The Daily Chronicle, 20 Feb. 1894. See also Westminster Gazette, 24 Feb. 1894.
2. Ibid., 10 Sept. 1901. See also Gladstone's reply to Howard Vincent: H.C. 14 May 1906, 182.
3. H.C. 16 Aug. 1894, 1246.
4. H.C. 15 Sept. 1893, 1279.
5. H.C. 21 Sept. 1893, 1781.
6. H.C. 14 June 1906, 1138.

their activities intensified. Significantly, the lull in anarchist activity coincided with the long period of Conservative rule between 1895 and 1906.

Anarchism aroused and enraged with its extreme political message and consequent provocative image. By refusing to concede to the ruling institutional standards of change and by forming its own rules, anarchism placed itself outside the political system. It preached a new set of social and ethical codes and sought nothing less than the total collapse of the existing social order. No socialist group elicited as strong a reaction and hence none tested the limits of British tolerance as did anarchism.

Anarchism provoked the British authorities to the threshold of repression but did not engender far-reaching modifications in the policing function, in the law or in cultural dispositions towards civil liberties in general. The fundamental right of propaganda was not denied to the anarchists and no laws were passed to put an end to the movement as in other countries. Despite the pressure from foreign governments - which had been exerted as early as 1881 when the Russian authorities criticised Britain for allowing the Anarchist International to convene[1] - Britain continued to provide asylum for anarchist fugitives throughout the period. The Aliens Act granted the police powers to expel or refuse entry to criminals and other undesirable elements, but anarchists were not included in these categories. In fact, unlike ordinary immigrants, political refugees were not required to prove economic viability in order to be allowed into the country. The limited institutionalised reaction mirrored not only the character of British anarchism but also the elasticity of the social fabric in which it developed.

As a corollary, anarchism exposed some of the ways in which the status quo was defended against groups divergent from conventional norms and goals. The code of law, the police and the measure of tolerance enjoyed by revolution-

1. The Times, 25 July 1881.

aries, was each seen to contribute to the protection of the system against extremist actions and against any marked advance of uncompromising revolutionary ideas.

Negative political images were also important weapons in the political armoury, especially in an age which saw the upsurge of mass communication. The case history of British anarchism illustrates the powerful impact of images. That is not to say that the anarchist movement would have otherwise prospered. As was shown in chapters two and three the movement suffered from ideological shortcomings and inner weaknesses and was rejected by the mainstream of the labour movement. However, the image further impeded its advance. The public was confronted by an impermeable image that isolated anarchism and its propounders from any sympathy. The image led the public to act as its own censor and thus prevented serious ideological debate about anarchist tenets from taking place. The image also created an atmosphere in which official behaviour towards anarchism only rarely came under critical scrutiny, while at the same time it provided the rationale for a hostile and discriminatory public attitude. In the light of such circumstances, repressive measures were superfluous.

The various responses to anarchism - either in the shape of mental images or in actual behaviour - record a range of current popular attitudes, the mores by which different segments of the public were guided and the rhetoric they used. No less important are the glimpses these responses provide into the mechanism of political control. But above all, they echo some of the underlying anxieties and tensions that characterise the period.

The rise of British anarchism in the early 1880s coincided with the appearance of cracks in the façade of Victorian optimism and complacency. The subsequent entrenchment of a hostile image of anarchism paralleled the deepening sense of uncertainty in the face of a succession of economic depressions; of labour unrest which was sometimes manifested in an extra-constitutional manner; of the emergence of socialism calling for the redistribution of

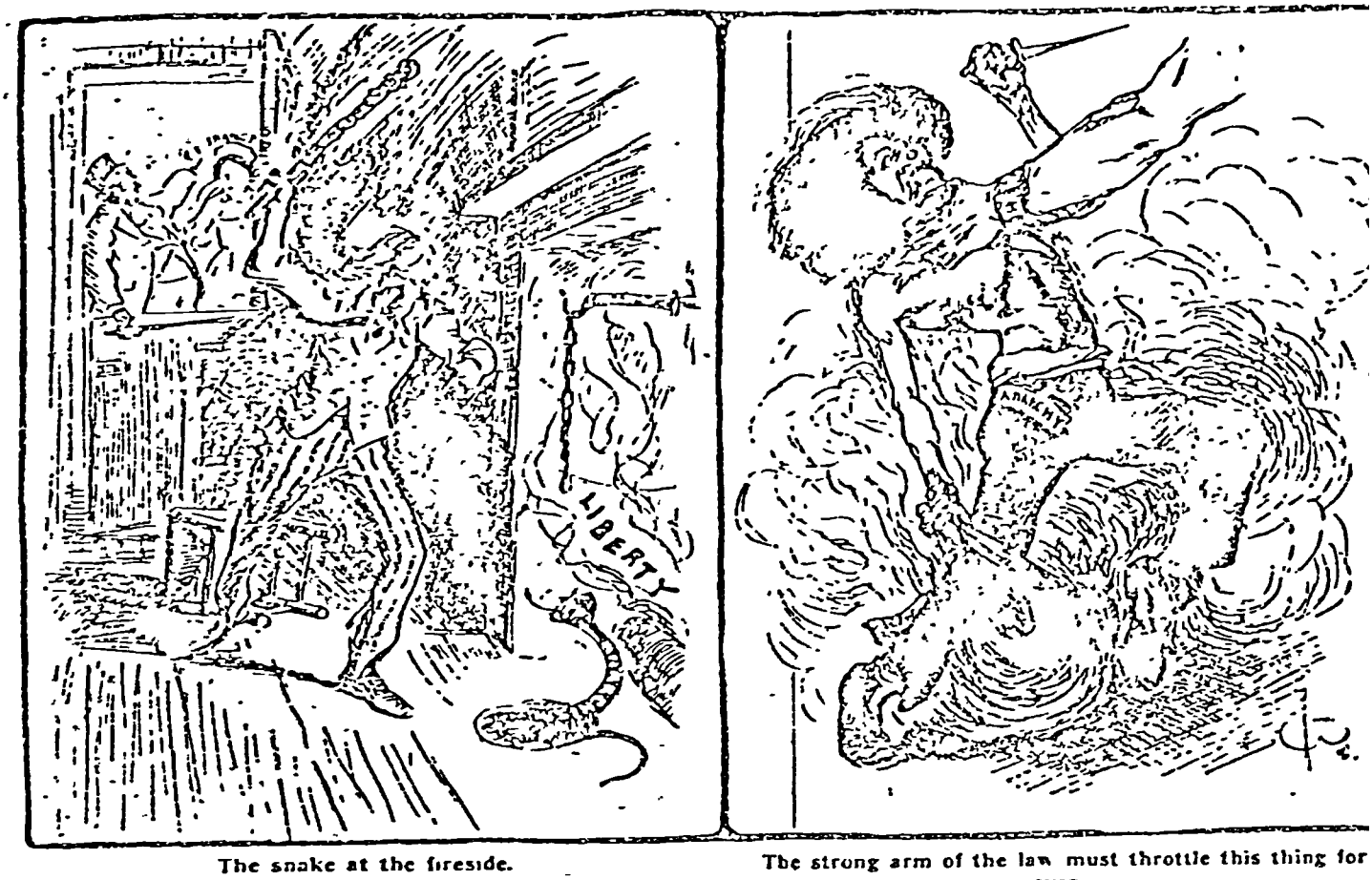
wealth; of a growing spirit of democratisation that posed a threat to the traditional bastions of power and thus to the integrity of the existing political and social edifice; of the ebb of religious faith, the questioning of cherished ideals and values and the related demands for change in the status of women and the liberalisation of education.

These internal challenges to Victorian stability and sense of social harmony took place in the context of an external challenge to British industrial and maritime hegemony, especially by Germany, and the corresponding heightening of patriotic fervour, pride in the Empire and anti-alien feelings.

If it was increasingly recognised that some change was necessary and even inevitable, then anarchism epitomised change in its most threatening guise. The completeness of the perceived image allowed it to reflect with stark simplicity the much less defined fears that formed the political and social undercurrent during this period. The intensely antagonistic reaction to anarchism and the preoccupation with the subject indeed suggest that it touched a growing source of collective unease.

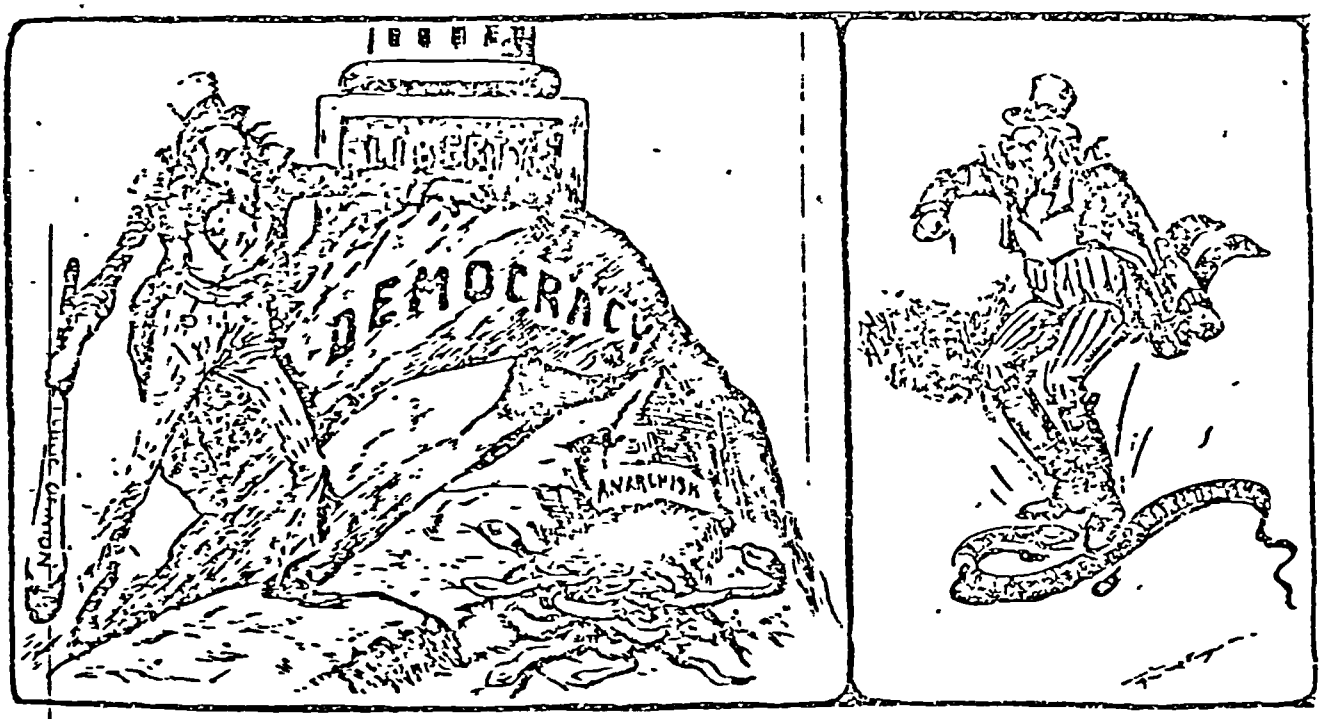
Thus, in addition to casting light on one corner of the British left, the combined chronicle of the British anarchist movement and the public reaction to it give some insights into the social consciousness and fabric of Victorian and Edwardian Britain.

APPENDIX



The snake at the fireside.

The strong arm of the law must throttle this thing for ever.

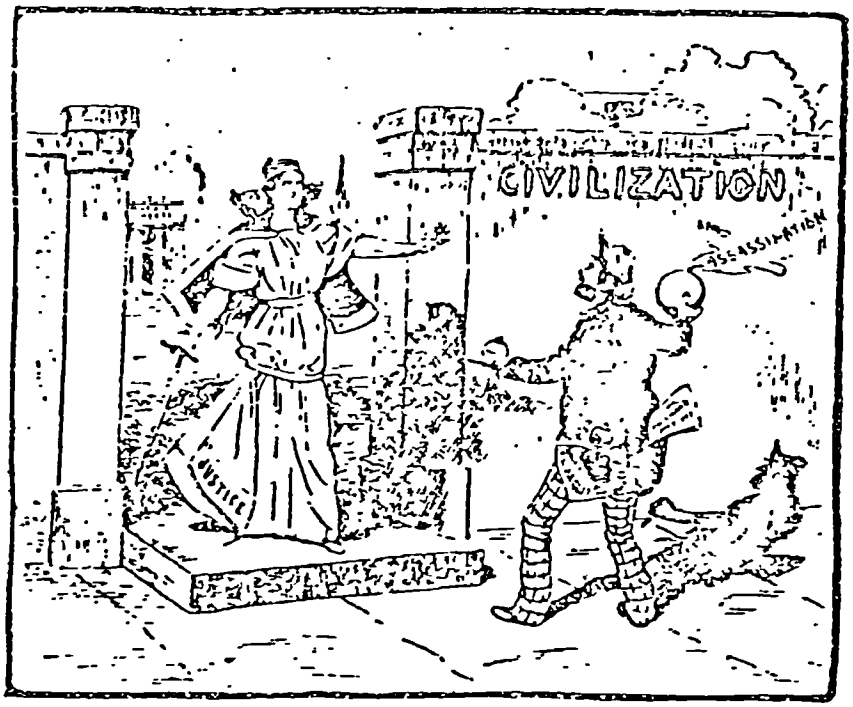


UNCLE SAM: "It's time to clean out that nest of vipers."

Stamp out the reptile.

"The Crusade Against Anarchy. Some Telling Cartoons". Daily Express, 23 Sept. 1901.

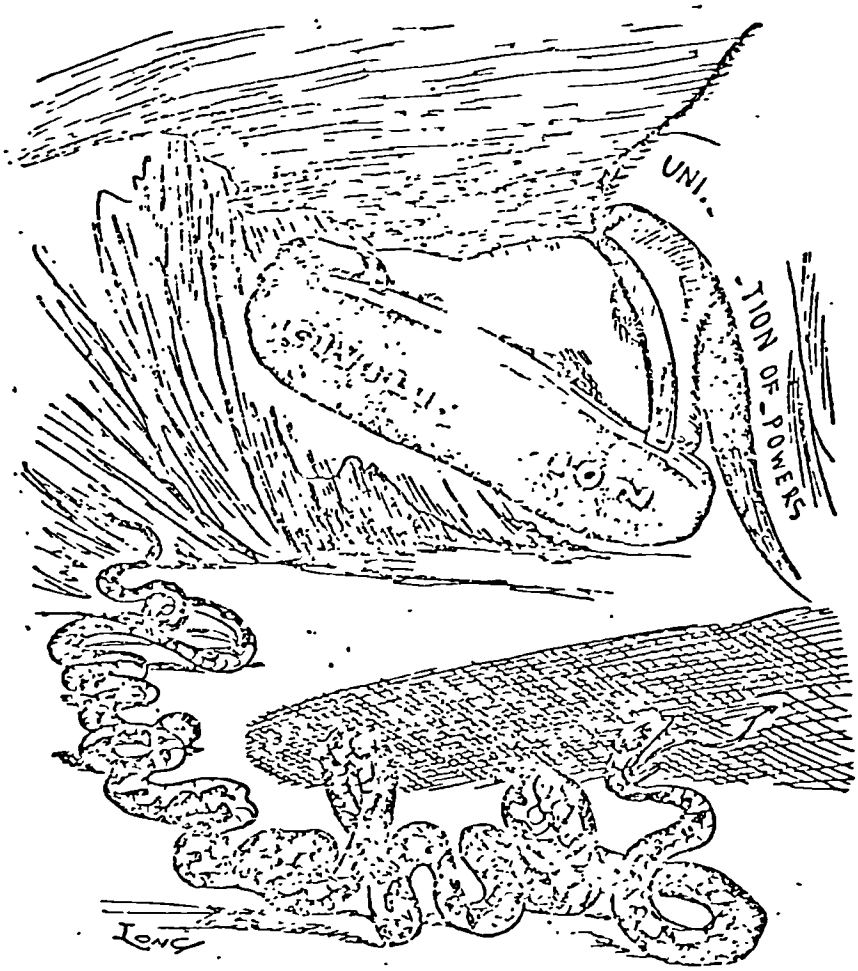
Drive out the cowardly wolves.



Put him out and keep him out.

"The Crusade Against Anarchy. Some Telling Cartoons". Daily Express, 23 Sept. 1901.

CRUSH THE REPTILE.



Civilised society must find some means to crush the vile reptile of Anarchism.

Daily Express, 10 Sept. 1901.

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

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- Nettlau Collection.

  The collection includes anarchist propaganda material; correspondence between anarchists (much of it to and from Nettlau); lecture lists; newspaper cuttings; MSS of anarchist writings and memoirs, and Nettlau's own original (longhand) MS about British anarchism (in German).

- Socialist League Archives.

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Arbeter Fraint

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Free Exchange

Free Trade

Freedom

The General Strike

Germinal

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Herald of Revolt (1910-14)

Liberty

The New Order

The Revolutionary Review
The Spur
The Torch (1891-96)
The Torch (1913-14)
The Voice of Labour
The Walsall Anarchist

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Daily Herald
The Daily Mail
Daily News
The Democratic Review
Evening News
The Free Life
Hammersmith Socialist Record
Humanity
The Individualist
Justice
The Labour Annual
The Labour Elector
The Labour Leader
The Liberty Annual
The Link
Our Corner
The Practical Socialist
Reynolds's Newspaper
Seed-Time
The Social Democrat
The Socialist
The Socialist Standard
The Sower
The Spectator
The Syndicalist
The Times
To-Day
The Truthseeker

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The Daily Argus
Evening Herald (Dublin)
The Evening Standard
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